SMALL OFFERS
Towards the *Service of the Tabernacle*
in the Wilderneſs.

Four Diſcourſes, *accommodated unto the Deſigns of*

PRACTICAL GODLINESS.

The *Firſt*, Concerning the *Methods* wherein men ought to Engage both *Themſelves* and their *Houſes* in the *Service* of God.

The *Second*, Concerning the Right and Beſt waies of *Redeeming* TIME in the World.

The *Third*, Concerning the *Carriage* which we ſhould have under TRIALS uſed by *God* upon us.

The *Fourth*, Concerning the END which in our *Deſires* of *Life*, we ſhould *propound* unto ourſelves.

Preached partly at Boſton, *partly at* Charlſton.

By COTTON MATHER,
Paſtor of a Church in *Boſton*.

Publiſhed by a Gentleman lately Reſtored from threatning Sickneſs; *as an humble* ESSAY *to ſerve the Intereſt of* Religion, *in Gratitude unto GOD for his* Recovery.

Printed by *R. Pierce*. Sold by *Joſ. Brunning* at his ſhop near the *Exchange* in *Boſton*. MDCLXXXIX.

ERRATA.

PAge 11. Line 7. for Poſſeſſion, r. *Profeſſion.* p. 43. line. 3. after *to*, add *Pray.* p. 76. l. 7. blott out *a.* p. 112. l. 2. for *and* r. an p. 125. for *Thms* r. *Thus.*

BRITISH MUSEUM

To my Ever-honoured Father-in-Law,

JOHN PHILIPS *Esq*;

Sir

YOu cannot but *Remember*, and I should not have *this* Occasion of Telling you *so*, if you did not *well* Remember, That many months are not passed since You encountred a Dangerous *Fever*; by which the *Vital Ty* between what must *Return to God that gave it*, and what must *Return into the Earth as it has been there*, was very near burned asunder in you; But *God had then mercy on You, and not on You only, but on me also, lest I should have had sorrow upon sorrow.* It was a darker Time in your *House*, than (thro' Grace) with your *Soul*, when we beheld You lying under what look'd like an *Arrest* laid on you by the cold Hand of *Death*, and saying, *I shall go the gates of the Grave, I am deprived of the Residue of my years.* But the *Blessing* which if you study to *be* a Blessing you can never want, was then your priviledge; even, *To be much* pray'd *for*; and behold, the Effect of those our Applications to the *God of your Life!* On *that* very day when your faithful and worthy

Paſtor the Reverend *Charles Morton*, with your pious Neighbours were together *praying* for You, we had our Anſwer, and You are yet alive. *The living, the living, they ſhall praiſe God*; and *You* have a bleſſed *Opportunity*, I hope not without ſome *Inclination* to be doing ſo. Twas from *ſuch* an Inclination, that your *Vowes* did accompany our *Prayers*, and your Sickneſs expired in Reſolutions, *To endeavour the doing of ſomething for the Service of the Churches here*, and this particularly, *By the Publication of ſome little* Book, *accommodated unto the Deſignes of* Practical Godlineſs *in the Perſons and Houſes of this profeſſing people.* Tis pitty indeed that ever any *ſpecial Trouble*, or any *ſpecial Mercy* ſhould befal us, without producing ſome *ſpecial ſervice* to the Name of our God, upon whoſe *Orders* and *Errands* every ſuch Diſpenſation comes. Accordingly, you have commanded me to give you certain *Diſcourſes*, which You thought agreeable to your ſerious *purpoſes*; and *Theſe* are They. Unto *You* firſt I ought to make the *Dedication* of them; becauſe it is by your *Deſire* and *Expence* that they are to paſs under any further Dedication; they are now therefore no longer *Mine* but *Yours*, and to be Entituled, *The Writing of a Well-willer to Religion, after he had been* ſick, *and was Recovered of his Sickneſs.* Theſe Compoſures are *ſingled out* from other Effects of my *Daily Studies*, not becauſe of any *ſingular* Excellency adorning of them; for

they

they are but the firſt, rude, untranſcribed Notes of *Sermons* uttered in my ordinary Courſe of Preaching more than once or twice commonly in a Week; and ſtrangers abroad in the world may without the leaſt wrong to *me*, believe, That *New-England* is a Countrey wherein there are every week in the year delivered more than Two *Hundred Sermons*, to be preferred unto the *Beſt* of Theſe. But *theſe* are by You pitch't upon, becauſe they are moſt Expreſſive of the *Reſolutions*, and *Exerciſes* and *Experiences*, which your ſelf would chooſe to recommend unto the Children of your People; and tho they may amount to no better than *Goat's hair* and *Rams-ſkins*, it was thought they might be accepted among, *Small offers to the Service of the Tabernacle*. There was once a great King, to whoſe Triumphs while many others made their more noble *Offerings*, a poor man in ſome Tranſport of Affection, having nothing elſe, took up his palm-full of water from the ſtreet, and offering of *That*, Received from the generous *Conqueror* a Gracious *Recompence*. Even ſuch a *King* is our God! Sr. You have choſen to fetch a *Thank-Offering* for *Him*, from ſuch a *Kennel*, ſuch a *Puddle* (alas, it is no better!) as the Head and Heart of the *greateſt Sinner in all the Riſing Generation*. But I can only ſay, Tis as welcome from *me* to *You*, as I believe, tis from *You* to *Him* that

made

made us *Both*. It is indeed a peice of *Self-Denial* that your Commands have obliged me unto; for whatever others may think of *Appearing in Print*, my own Opinion of it is, that unleſs a man be extremely unacquainted both with himſelf, and with the world, he will be rather *Afraid* or *Aſham'd* of it, than *Taken* with it; Let him that wants *Humbling* become an *Authour*, and he ſhall have it, if *mean Thoughts* have not made him utterly *Unſenſible*. Nothing but a *Reſpect* unto the *Intereſt* of God and of Truth, and a *Reſolve* to go cheerfully thro' much Contempt, Obloquy, Detrectation, can make any *conſiderate* Perſon to Salute mankind in the Quality of a *Writer*. But Since it is my *Duty* to be (like holy *Bradford*) alwayes doing *Good*, with *Tongue*, or *Pen*, or *Purſe*, I ſhould account it my *Honour* if my *Pen* may be employed for any Advancement of *Practical Godlineſs*, tho' it Coſt me never ſo many *Temptations*, as it muſt coſt me not a few.

Accept then, *Dear Sir*, the Little Book which You have called for; I may more fairly ſpeak it than he of old unto his Father, *I have done according as thou badeſt me; ariſe, I pray thee, Sir, and eat of my veniſon, that thy ſoul may bleſs me.* The Bleſſing which once *Caleb* gave to a *Son-in-law* as I do not *Want*, I need not *Ask*; But the *Bleſſing* which I am now Craving is, *That* of your *Prayers* on my Behalf, to the Eternal

Eternal *Father*, for ſuch *Gifts*, and *Graces*, and *Improvements*, as tis *His Work alone* to beſtow upon us; and eſpecially that I may be preſerved from the *Sins* and *Snares* which *Miniſters* in their younger years are moſt endangered by; of which I have long thought PRIDE (the natural Effect of *Self-Ignorance* and *Small Experience*) to be the principal. The Prayers of one ſo *Related*, have an *Authoritative Bleſſing* in them; and that I may further *earn* them, I take the liberty to mention my own Supplications unto the God of Heaven for *Yourſelf*. May the Almighty God Long preſerve your Life, and give your *Hoary Head* to be *found in the way of Righteouſneſs*. May You have before you the Exemple of that *Nehemiah* who was, *A man come to ſeek the welfare of the Children of Iſrael*; of that *Cornelius*, who was, *A Devout man, that feared God with all his Houſe, and pray'd to God alwayes*; of that Treaſurer, who made the *Bible* his perpetual Companion, and *Beleeved with all his Heart*: and as You have Opportunity, *Do Good unto all men*. May the *Death* (I dare not ſay, the *Loſs*) of your *Ten Children*, the laſt of which going from you made a *Tenth Wave* in your Tryals, only promote your *Union* & *Communion* with Him who is *Better than Ten ſons*; and may you enjoy in the *Houſe* of God, a *Place* and a *Name better than that of*

ſons

sons & daughters. May all the *Storms* besides those which the Adventures of your younger years upon the *Atlantic Ocean*, made you betimes acquainted withal, in an unstable & a tempestuous World, prove so many fresh & fair Gales, to befriend your *late* but *sure* Arrival unto the *Rest which remains for the people of God*; Wherein the *Anchor* of your *Hope*, is already Cast, and whereto You are with the more-than-half Furled *Sails* of *Time* hastening apace, after him that said, *I desire to* loose Anchor *and be with Christ, which is by far the best of all.* 'Tis by these Prayers that I would approve my self,

Sir,

Your Dutiful *Son*

and very humble Servant,

COTTON MATHER.

THE

THE

GOOD MANS RESOLUTION.

Josh. 24. 15.

But as for MEE and MY HOUSE we will serve the Lord.

SECT. I.

NEVER was there in this world a People more obliged or encouraged unto the *Service* of the Great God, than we the *New-English Israel* are. The God of Heaven is *Our God*, and it becomes us to Fear Him; *our Fathers God*, and how much ought we to worship Him? *To serve God* was the very Errand which we were brought into this Wilderness upon; and has hitherto been both our *Glo-Glory* & our *Defence*. That we now grow so dull and cold in this, we may write an *Ichabod* upon all our enjoyments, and therein see our *Chariots*

and our *Horse-men* gone. To Revive the Decay'd *Service* of God among us, would be to reduce us into that Favour and Friendship of him who was *The Hope of our Fathers*, which would make us happy enough to refute all the *Lies* of our Enemies. Thus would *God the Lord speak peace unto us.* Thus would *Salvation be nigh to us*, and *Glory dwell in our Land.*

SECT. II.

TO *do* some, and *gain* more *Service* for our God, the Text now before us is to be Discourſed on.

Theſe words are among the *laſt* words of *Joſhuah, the ſervant of the Lord*; they are a Devout and a Divine ſentence uttered by the renouned *Joſhua* in a Speech to *The Parliament of* Iſrael. The *Dying Words* of all Great and Good men, have uſually been eſteemed Remarkable by the Survivers; and thoſe books which contain *Apophthegmata morientium* have been reckoned perhaps among the moſt uſeful in the world. Tho the *Dying Songs* of *Swans* have not been ſuch things as the *Vulgar Error* has reputed them; yet the *Dying Words* of *Saints* have afforded a fit *Moral* for the *Fable*. The ſpeech of a Dying Saint has as deep a ſavour of *Heaven*, as the *Breath* of a dying man has of *Earth*. But methinks, the *Dying Words* of a *Joſhua* ſhould be peculiar *Oracles*; peruſe them, and you will find them ſo. He had been firſt, the *Lord General* of *Iſrael's* Army, and

was now the *Lord Protector* of *Israels* Common-Wealth. In this Capacity, a few months before he dy'd, he issued out orders for a *Convention of States*, to meet at *Sychem*, a place about forty miles from his own Abode. The *Senate*, the *Judges*, & the *Officers*, and all the *Representatives* of the people being assembled, before the *Tabernacle*, which on this extraordinary occasion was removed hither, this famous Prince endeavours to settle & confirm them in the *Service* of the living God. It is likely he feared a secret Retaining of *Idolatry* among many, while he was yet alive; but it is *certain*, he fore-saw an open Defection to *Idolatry* hastening upon them, when he should be *dead* and *gone*. Wherefore, he lies in against it, by a most powerful and pathetic *Speech*, which has in it,

First, An *History* of *Memorable Providences* wherein they had experienced the matchless kindness of God unto them.

Secondly, An *Inference* from this *History*; which is expressed in two things.

First, A *Counsil*. He concludes, *Now therefore fear the Lord and serve* Him. *Therefore!* Wherefore? Why, inasmuch as you find the Lord so bountiful, that you cannot possibly *Amend* your selves if you leave Him, or *excuse* your selves if you grieve Him. *Therefore* are you to *fear* Him, *serve* Him. Every *Mercy* of God hath a *Therefore*, in it; it calls for Gratitude

tude and Obedience. When God has been merciful to us, even *common* Ingenuity, and much more, *holy* Ingenuity will put us upon that Enquiry, *What shall I render to the Lord?* Behold an Answer in this, *Therefore!* We are *Therefore* to *fear the Lord and serve him*; we are *Therefore* to put away all our *Idols*, all our *Follies* for ever more.

Secondly, A *Copy*. He gives them a *Precedent*, an *Example*, to induce them hereunto. The Pattern of a *considerable person*, has no inconsiderable Influence upon the Observers of it. Such an one does *good* or *ill*, even like a *Briareus*, with an *Hundred* Hands. An *Hundred*, & an *Hundred* more will do like *Him*. If he be wicked, he does according to the Language of *Solomon*, *Speak with his Feet*. If he be Godly, he is, according to the Character of *John*, a *Voice*. Such an One most effectually bespeaks all about him, as *Gideon* did once, *Do what you see me to do*.

Thus *Joshua* enforces his *farewel Exhortation* here; saith he, *Be it known to you, that I and my house will serve the Lord*; I was once your *Leader*, pray let me be *so* still. As I leadd you into the *Canaan* of the Lord, let me have so much credit with you, as also to lead you unto the *Service* of the Lord. Be assured, I shall be a *Witness* against you another day, if you do not now receive me as a *Copy* for you.

You

You have here *Joſhua*'s Reſolution; and it was founded upon ſuch *moral Reaſons*, that we may take it as *Written for the Admonition of us all*. Wherefore this is the *Doctrine*, which I would demand your Attention to.

DOCT.

Every man ſhould engage both HIMSELF *and* HIS HOUSE *in the* Service *of the Almighty GOD.*

SECT. III.

WE have diverſe *Propoſitions* now before us, to diſcourſe upon. The Firſt of them is *this*.

PROP. I.

The whole *Duty* of man, is contained in the true *Service* of God. Both in the *Firſt* Covenant, and in the *New* Covenant which God has made with man, there is a *Duty* which man muſt pay to God. In the *Firſt* Covenant this Duty was to be paid in a way of *meritorious Obedience*; in the *New* Covenant, this Duty is to be paid in a way of *ingenuous Gratitude*. But the *Service* of God, *this* ever comprizes all our Duty in it. It is the ſame that the Wiſe man refers unto, in *Eccl.* 12. 13. *Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.* There are diverſe comprehenſive and ſynonymous Terms, by which our *Duty* to God is expreſſed in the Scripture of Truth. Our

Duty is called *A Serving of God*, as it refers to the *Acts* of our lives *in* which; but its also called *A Fearing of God*, and *A Loving of God*, as it refers to the *Frames* of our hearts, *with* which we are to do it. It is called, *A Knowing of God*, as it refers to the principle of it; it is likewise a *Living* to Him, and *Walking* with Him, on the same accounts that it is a *Serving* of Him.

The *Service* of God notes two things, which are to accompany our whole *Duty* to him.

It notes, first, the *Homage* therein done to our God. The *Service* of God is His *Worship*, His *natural* Worship, and His *appointed* Worship. Hence the *Septuagint* so translate our Text, *I and my house will* worship *the Lord*. We *serve* God, when we render to him his *Natural* Worship. So tis intimated in *Deut.* 10. 12. *Fear the Lord thy God, walk in His waies, love him, & serve the Lord thy God with all thy Heart.* When we *hope* in God, when we *call* on God, when we *cleave* to God, then we *serve* Him. And we *serve* God when we render to Him his *appointed* Worship. This was intended in *Exod.* 8. 1. *Let my people go, that they may serve me.* We *serve* Him when we *observe* the *Ordinances* of God, when we adore him according to the Rules of His Word in His *House*, and wait upon him in the use of his blessed and sacred *Institutions*.

It, Secondly, notes the *Honour* therein brought

to

to our God. *Service* is perform'd to God, when *Glory* is procur'd for Him. His *Essential* Glory we can by no means advance, we may His *declarative*: and therein we *serve* the Lord. 'Tis a passage in *Isa.* 43. 10. *Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant.* Our *Testimonies* to God's *Excellencies* are the things by which we *serve* Him. We *serve* God, when we acknowledge Him as our *Best Good*, and our *last End*, and our *Omnipresent Judge*. We *serve* him when we *think* and *speak* well of him our selves, and obtain many others to do so too. A *Witness* for God, is a *Service* to him.

SECT. IV.

THis being thus explained, I pass on to a Second Proposition.

PROP. II.

Every man should engage HIMSELF in the *Service* of the Almighty God.

The purpose and study of every man should be this, *I will serve the Lord.* We should all be able truly to say of God, as in *Act.* 27. 23. *His I am, and Him I serve. A Servant of God*, this was the Title, not of *Joshua* alone, but of other Worthies too; when *Abraham* is mentioned, it is, *Abraham the* Servant *of the Lord.* When *Moses* is mentioned, it is, *Moses the* Servant *of the Lord.* When God speaks of *Job*, he says,

Job

Job my Servant. Thus was *Jonah*, thus was *Elijah*, thus was *Zerubbabel* also styled. And it is a style which *We* too should be ambitious of. If we would not be miserable for ever, we must be the mystical, the *Spiritual seed of Israel*; but such are so saluted in 1 *Chron.* 16. 13. *O ye seed of Israel his Servant.* As our *Fathers Friend*, so our *Fathers Lord*, we must not *forsake*. We must all be the *Servants* of God, as our Father before us was. And this especially for the three ensuing causes.

REASON I.

We are to *serve God*, because God hath *Made* us. The Argument with which *Paul* perswaded *Philemon* to receive a *Run-away Servant* of his own, was that in *Phil.* 1. 19. *Thou owest unto me even thine own self.* By that Argument should each one of us be perswaded to become a *Dutiful Servant* of the Lord, *We owe unto him even our own selves.* Man! 'tis most fit thing that thy *Maker* should be thy *Master*.

There are two Questions which I hope every Child within these Walls can give some right Answer to. The Answer to them will render it *unquestionable*, That you and I are to *Serve* God for ever.

One Question is, *By whom were you made?*

We have an Answer to this, in *Psal.* 100. 3. *Know ye, that the Lord, he is God, and it is He that*

that has made us, and not we our selves. Thus did the Psalmist once argue, *O come, let us worship before the Lord our maker.* Why? If he be our *Maker*, He is to be the Object of our *Service*. And this the rather, because of another Question, which is, *For What were you made?* We have an Answer to this in *Isa.* 43. 21. *This people have I formed for* my Self, *they shall shew forth* my *praise.* When we *praise* God, we *serve* God. Why, This is the very business which we were sent into the world upon. We had never appeared in the Rank of *Actual Beings* if God had not propounded some *Service* to be done unto Himself, by creatures of our shape and mould. We are *Created* by God and *Endowed* by him. What could it be for, but *this?* That God may have some service from us. 'Tis said in *Act.* 17. 28. *In him we live and move and have our being.* Most absurd shall we be, if it be not *for Him* too.

REASON, II.

We are to *serve* God, because Christ has *Bought* us. Indeed, the *Arminian universal Redemption* we reject with a just abhorrence. The *Satisfaction* of our Lord Redeemer, was not *Intended* by Him, for the *Redemption* of all mankind; nor was it *Intended* any further than his *Intercession* is, which reaches only to the Elect of God. The *Virtue* and *Success* of our Lords death depends not wholly on something

to be done by men which *God* is not the Doer of; otherwise, men would themselves be the *Principals* in procuring their own Salvation. But one scope of our Lord's Death was even to purchase for us, that *Grace*, that *Faith*, that *Free-Will*, which may qualifie us to enjoy the *Virtue* and *Success* of it. Certainly *Peter* was more beholden unto the Merit of Christ for *his* Redemption, than *Judas* was for *his*. Yet the *Purchase* of Christ wonderfully binds us *all* to the *Service* of God.

For *First*, the *Redemption* of Christ has made our *Serving* of God, a *possible thing*. Had it not been for this, poor fallen undone man had never been in a Capacity to *serve* the Lord. We had never heard this Call from heaven, *O Repent, Return, Reform!* this voice from on high, *O set your selves now to the* serving of that God, *whom you have been sinning against*; it had never sounded in our Ears, if the Lord Jesus had not made Himself a Sacrifice. We must have continued the *Slaves* of the devil for ever, if the *Stings* of the Dragon had not fastned on the Lord. The Lord Jesus has bought us all into such a Condition, that the Proffers and the Tenders of the Gospel might be made unto us. We are told of some in 2. *Pet.* 2. 1. Who *Deny the Lord that bought them.* O vile Sacriledge and Impiety! That we might all have the priviledge of an Invitation to the Service of God, this has cost

cost no less than the *Heart-blood* of Christ; and what a monstrous villany were it for us now to despise the Invitation? *Again*,

The *Redemption* of Christ has made our *Serving* of God, a *Reasonable* thing. We are all among the Redeemed, either in Reality, or at least in Possession, all the *Chosen* and *Called* of God, are most *really* interested in the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus; and therefore, for them to decline the *Service* of God, were as *unequal* as it is *unlikely*. But every one of us is at least *professedly* interested in it. Man, art thou willing to quit all claim unto the Death and Blood of the Lord Jesus? O *No*, not for ten thousand worlds. Every one saies, *I hope I am Redeemed!* Well then, The *Service* of God is that which we must count our selves Redeem'd unto. What saies the Appostle, in 1. Cor. 6. 20 *Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorifie God.* We that have been the *Captives of the mighty and the prey of the terrible*, apprehend our selves to be set at Liberty from their horrible Tyrannies, by the *Suffering* of Christ; What less than the *Service* of God, are we thereby obliged unto? In a word, We are the *Bought servants* of God; and wo to us if our Behaviours be not agreeable to our Obligations.

REASON III.

The Lords daily *Mercy* to us, requires our hearty *Service* to Him. It is noted of the rudest among the Gentiles, in Luc. 22. 25. Their *Benefactors* exercise a *Lordship* over them. Never, Never had we any *Benefactor* like to our God, who *daily loads us with his Benefits*. Unthankful wretches are we, if we shake off the *Lordship* of such a Lord. It was an Address once made to a Governour in *Act.* 24. 2. *By thee we enjoy great quietness, and very worthy deeds are done unto us by thy providence.* It were a disloyal, an unworthy thing, not to *serve* such a Governour. Truly, From God we enjoy *great quietness*; by the *Providence* of *God*, we are delivered from a Thousand perils *every day*: and we are surrounded with ten thousand Comforts *Every day*; by the *Providence* of God we are directed, protected, sustained and supplyed, *every day*. This calls for the *Service* of God at our hands. It is said, in Rom. 12. 1. *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice unto Him.* What a perswasive piece of Oratory is that! *I beseech you by the* Mercies *of God.* He that urges you to the *Service* of God may thus plead with you, *I beseech you, Brethren, by the* Mercies *of God, that God may not have one* Servant *in the world the less for you. I beseech you, Brethren, that when the Goodness, and mercy of God is following of you, you do*

not

not turn your backs on the Service *of God.* To pursue, this Argument; *I beseech you Brethren,* Whose *Light* is it, whereby you are every day revived? It is *God's.* Whose *Air* is it, whereby you are every day refreshed? It is *God's.* Whose *Fire* is it that warms you? Whose *Meat* is it that feeds you? Whose *Raiment* is it that covers you? All is *God's.* O then, *Serve* Him. These are the *Cords of a man,* with which we are bound to the *Service* of our Lord. This is the Poesie which God has inscribed in the Ring of every mercy, *O learn to serve the Giver of this!* It was a sad Complaint which the Lord made in Isa. 1. 2. *I have nourished them, and brought them up,* yet *have they rebelled against me.* Alas, what a YET is there? Our God has been as a *Father* to us; and *yet* shall not we Serve Him as our *Master*? He Relieves us, He Supports us, He Bestowes on us the *mercies* of *Children,* and shall not we *yet* return so much as the *Respects* of *Servants* unto Him? The *Heavens* will *hear* and be amazed, the *Earth* will *give ear* and be *astonished,* at a thing so much exceeding *Brutality* it self, as this.

SECT. V.

But we are not to be *Alone* in the *Service* of God. Man is a *sociable Creature;* & as he does *need,* so he must *help* Humane Society, in this *Grand concern.* Wherefore we have a Third

Propoſition yet to be reflected on.

PROP. III.

Every man ſhould engage HIS HOUSE alſo in the *Service* of the Almighty God. We are all related unto ſome *Houſe* or other. Sometimes a *Nation* is called by that name. So tis ſaid in Exek. 3. 1. *Speak to the* Houſe *of Iſrael.* And thus, every man ſhould labour to promote the Service of God in the *Nation* which he belongs unto. All that can be properly done by him for his *Nation*, in his *Station* to ſet *up* and bring *in* the *Service* of God, ſo much every man is to do, if ever he would give a good Account of his *Talents*, in the Day of God's appearing. But moſt uſually, a *Family* is called by this Name; and ſo it is in the Text now before us. Tis a *Metonymie*; the *Houſe* is put for them who *dwell* in the houſe. Thoſe who cohabit in the *ſame houſe* are to endeavour that the *ſame God* may be *ſerved* by all under the Roof. And this is incumbent eſpecially on the *Superiors* in the Houſe. All that are *About* us, but cheefly all that are *Under* us, are by us to be drawn or driven to the *Service* of God. The *Maſter* of the Family is to ſee unto it, that every one under his Charge become the *Servant* of the Lord, And this becauſe of ſuch things as theſe.

REASON. 1.

We ſhould engage our *Houſes* to the *Service* of God, out of *Reſpect* to God Himſelf. To the

Houſehold-

Houſholder it may well be ſaid, *For God's ſake look after thy Houſe; For God's ſake, Let there be God's ſervice in it.* To ſpeak particularly,

Firſt, The *Commandment* of God calls for it. We have this *Commandment* often repeated unto us, That we ſhould be careful about the *Inſtruction* and *Converſion* of them that we are charged with. 'Tis a *Commandment* inculcated in the *Old* Teſtament. We have in Deut. 6. 6, 7. *The words which I command thee, thou ſhalt diligently* teach *them unto thy* Children. We have it again, in Pſal. 78. 67. *He commanded our fathers, that they ſhould make known unto their* Children, *that theſe might ſet their hope in God, and keep his Commandments.* We have it once more in Deut. 4. 9, 10. *Gather the people, that they may learn to fear me, and that they may* teach *their Children.* 'Tis a *Commandment* not unmentioned in the *New* Teſtament alſo. We find in *Eph.* 6. 4. *Ye* Fathers, *bring up your* Children *in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.* Behold, How many ſolemn Charges are laid upon us to do our part, that God may be *ſerved* by all that are under our Inſpection. God does *Command* us, to *command* them, thereabout.

Secondly. The *Intereſt* of God calls for it. Our Lord ſaid unto a *Peter*, in *Joh.* 21. 15. *Loveſt thou me?* ..... *Then Feed my Lambs.* The like may be ſaid unto a *Maſter*, If thou doeſt *love* God, then bring thy *lambs* to *ſerve* Him,

To propagate *Religion* is to magnify and glorify the Lord. It is ſaid in Prov. 14. 28. *In the* multitude *of people is the King's honour*: as tis ſaid of an earthly, ſo may it be ſaid of the Heavenly King. Now if we cauſe our *Houſes* to *ſerve* God in Conjunction with our ſelves, hereby we propagate *Religion*; yea, to many generations. I remember, *Solomon* aſſigns this as one Cauſe, why he did well educate his own *Children*; twas becauſe his father had ſo dealt with *him*; Saith he in *Prov.* 4. begin. *Hear ye children the inſtruction of a father; for I was my father's ſon, and he taught me.* Let us fix *our* children in the *Service* of God, and they will afterwards do do ſo by *theirs*. Thus the Lord will alwaies have *A ſeed to ſerve him, which Will be accounted for a generation.* Our *Children*, did I ſay? yea, our *Servants* too, may in like manner carry on a Succeſſion of *Service* to the Lord. It was the Commendation of *Solomon*, in 1. *King.* 10. 8. *Happy are theſe thy ſervants, which hear thy wiſdome.* Now many ages after, we find the poſterity of them *Servants*, retaining a ſavour of Devotion and Affection to the Houſe of God.

REASON II.

We ſhould engage our *Houſes* to the *Service* of God, out of Reſpect to our Houſes too. Tis ſaid *A righteous man regards the life of his beaſt.* How much more will a *righteous man* regard the

ſtate

ſtate of his *Houſe*? We have two things alſo to be particularized here.

First, our *Houſes* are *miſerable* thro' us, if they do not *ſerve* God. It is hinted as a moſt extraordinary miſery upon any perſon, in *Prov.* 5. 35. *He ſhall dy without inſtruction.* Fearful and woful will be the caſe of thoſe in our *Houſes*, whom our *Inſtruction* ſhall not endear the *Service* of God unto. Our *Houſes* are *ſtarving*, while our God is not *ſerving* in them. The Prophet ſaid in *Lam.* 2. 11. *Mine eyes do fail with tears, becauſe the children ſwoon in the ſtreets of the city; they ſay to their mothers, where is the corn?* O doleful ſpectacle! But while our Children are ſtrangers to God, there is a worſe *Famine* in our *Houſes*, ; we ſuffer their Souls to pine and periſh without the *Bread* of life. Yea, our Houſes are *Burning* while our God is not *Serving* in them. What a terrible deſolation was that on *Sodom!* in alluſion to which, tis ſaid of a wicked man, in *Job.* 18. 15. *Brimſtone ſhall be ſcattered upon his habitation.* Why, there is a dreadful ſtorm of ardent Brimſtone, ready to fall upon thoſe *Houſes*, where the Children are not bringing up for God; the Wrath of God, like an *horrible Tempeſt* of burning Brimſtone is impending over them. What ſhall I ſay more? Our poor Children are enſlaved unto Satan, until they come to be *ſerving* of God. If a *Devil* had a *Bodily* Poſſeſſion of our Children, how

impatient

impatient ſhould we be to ſee them delivered? We ſhould cry out like the Woman of *Canaan*, in *Matth.* 15. 22. *Have mercy upon me, O Lord, my child is grievouſly vexed with a devil.* But know, the Devil has a *ſpiritual* Poſſeſſion of our Children, till they come to *ſerve* the Lord; the *evil ſpirit*, he takes them, he tears them, and they *ſome* and *pine*, and are thrown into the *water*, and into the *fire*. O pitty them; if we are not more ſtupid than the *Oſtrich*, pitty we our forlorn *Houſes*, and let not the *Service of God* be wanting thro' any fault of ours.

Secondly. We are *Accountable* for our *Houſes*, if they do not *ſerve God*. As the Daughter of *Pharaoh* ſaid unto the Mother of *Moſes*, in *Exod.* 2. 9. *Take this child and nurſe it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.* Thus does the Lord ſay unto us; *Take theſe children, take theſe young ones, and bring them up to* ſerve *me I will reward thee for it.* The Apoſtle ſaies, of Miniſters, *They watch for ſouls, as they that muſt give an account*; ſo it may be ſaid of all Houſe-keepers, *They muſt* give an account *of the ſouls that belong unto their Families.* Twas confeſſed by the Prophet in the Parable, 1. King. 20 39. *Behold a man turned aſide, and brought a man to me, and ſaid, Keep this man; if by any means he be miſſing, then ſhall thy life be for his.* This, This is a thing certainly to come to paſs in the dreadful Day of God. Man, *Thy life ſhall be for* his *life, who did*

not

not serve *God*, *because thou didst not teach him*, and *Thy* soul shall be for *his* soul, who is lost for ever, because thou didst not look after him. *Jacob* could say to his Uncle about his Lambs, *That which was torn of Beast, of my hands didst thou require it.* Behold, thou hast *Lambs* in thy *Fold*, Little ones in thy House; God will strain for it, --- if wild beasts, and Lusts carry any of them away from the *Service* of God through any neglect of thine, thou shalt smart for it in the fiery prison of God's terrible Indignation. Wherefore, as *Paul* saies, *O keep*, so I say, *O* Save, *that which is committed unto thy trust.*

SECT. VI.

IT is now Time that we make a due *Application* of these *Faithful Sayings*. And there is a double *Exhortation* which I have to manage.

The First *Exhortation*, is,

Let us all Resolve to engage OUR SELVES in the *Service* of God.

To Quicken you to it;

Consider seriously, Who your *Fellow-servants* are, when once you *serve* the Almighty God. O come in, and serve *God*, for shame; lest in the whole world, you have none but *Devils* to bear you company: And will you be of *their* side, of *their* sort? *Rebellion* truly *is as the sin of Witchcraft*, for this peice of Madness in it. All other Beings make a Surrender of themselves

unto

unto the *Service* of God; and it is ſaid of them in Pſal. 119. 91. *All are thy* Servants. O do not *you* ſtand out. Hearken, ye immortal ſouls; You have the call of *Chriſtians* to entice you into this happy *Service*. All the Eminent Believers of the By-paſt-Ages, the men, *of whom the world was not worthy*, all theſe do with *one* voice, and a *loud* one, urge this upon you; *Come and* ſerve *our God, as we have done before you*. Even *James* himſelf, the *Kinſman* of the Lord is ambitious rather of this Denomination *The* Servant *of the Lord*. And puiſſant Emperours before now, have gladly eſpouſed, ſuch a Title as that, *The Vaſſals of the Lord*. More than this, you have the Call of *Angels* to incite you thereunto. Thoſe bright *Morning ſtars* ask this of you, *Will you come and move in our Sphære?* They all are the *ſervants of the Lord*, and they *do his pleaſure*. At his Beck they clap their *ſilver wings*, and they *do his Commandments*. An *Angel* ſaid once to *John* the Apoſtle, *I am thy Fellow*-Servant. That *Angel* is yet alive; & he makes the motion to every one of us, *Wilt thou be my Fellow*-Servant *before the Lord?* Yea, the SON of GOD Himſelf gives you this Call. Of Him ſaith our God, in Iſa. 42. 1. *Behold my* Servant! Shall God ſay thus of *Chriſt?* and ſhall He not ſay it of *thee?* O do not ſcorn to be the *Servant* of that GOD, who has for a *Servant*, Him whom all the Third Heaven

Heaven is with endleſs Raptures adoring of.

Conſider, yet again, What your Service is, while you *ſerve* the Almighty God. No *Service* was ever ſo delightſome as this? tis, *All peace*, and *perfect peace*. No Service was ever ſo *profitable*; it brings in thoſe things, *The gain whereof is better than fine Gold*; you ſhall be ſure to experiment the Truth of that Maxim, *God is a Rewarder*. No Service was ever ſo *Honourable*. It prefers us to be *Favourites* of a greater Monarch than *he* that had an hundred and ſeven and Twenty Provinces under him. A *Service* do we count it? No, tis a *Freedom*. We are *Lords*, when we are *The Lord's*; Then, as *he* ſaid, *ſumus Domini*, is true, not only *in Genitivo ſingulari*, but *in Nominativo plurali*. It is a *Freedom*, *Yea*, tis a *Kingdom*. It gives us to ſing, *Lord, Thou haſt made us* Kings *and Prieſts*. It has been well ſaid, *Deo ſervire eſt regnare*. We have *Crowns* on our heads, all the while we are in the *Service* of God; but how maſſy, how weighty will they be grown when our *Pay-day* comes! Every *Servant* of God may now ſay, as in 2. *Tim.* 4. 8. *Henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteouſneſs*. But Then, Then, we ſhall aſcend thoſe glittering and glorious *Thrones*, which *Eye hath not ſeen*; on them we ſhall be *ever with the Lord*.

Conſider, finally, (and let me warn you faithfully) If you do not Reſolve to *ſerve* God, it had

had been *good for you, that you never had been born.* All that forsake the *Service* of God, are employ'd in *another* Service, which every soul may tremble at the Description of; 'tis a *Service* to those hellish Tigres in Eph. 2. *The course of this world, the prince of the power of the air, and the lust of the flesh.* You cast off the *Service* of *One*; but you incurr a *Bondage* to *three*: let Horror seize thee, O man, and let thy ears tingle, at the intimations of it. The *World*, the *Flesh*, & the *Devil* are thy Lords, if *God* have not Service from thee. All the Galleys in the *Mediterranean-Sea*, cannot shew a more dismal Vassalage! And what will the *Issue* of that Service be? Truly, *The Wages -- is Death.* God will not *save you*, if you do not *serve Him.* You that now grind for the *Philistines* of Hell every day, must one day be requited with only *Coals* and *Wounds*, for all your fatal Drudgeries; and though you then roar, *Lord, pitty me!* He will reply with a furious Rebuke, *Depart, I know you not.*

¶ Let me then address you in the Words of *Joshua*; *Choose now, whom you will* Serve. Come, speak up; come to some Resolution. Say, Will you *serve* the cursed and cruel Enemies of your Souls? or will you *serve* the GOD Whom it is *good for you to draw near unto?* O make this Return, *Lord, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.*

SECT. VII.

SECT. VII.

YOu have been told *Why*; now here *How*, you are to become, *The Servants of God*. There are diverſe *Counſils* to be given hereabout.

The Firſt COUNSIL.

Renounce and Forſake the *Service* of thoſe Idols which you have heretofore been enſlaved unto. We muſt, as *Joſhua* here aſſures us, we muſt *put away other gods*, if we we would *ſerve the Lord*. Our Lord has admoniſhed us, in *Matth.* 6. 24. *Ye cannot* ſerve *God and Mammon*. Even ſo, *Ye cannot* ſerve *God and Satan*. And again, *Ye cannot* ſerve *God and Sin*. The Holy God may ſay of *you* as of *them*, long ſince, *Ye have* ſerved *ſtrange gods*. But, O do you now ſay to *Him*, as *they* in Iſai. 21. 13. *O Lord, other lords beſides thee have had dominion over us*; but we will now be for Thee alone. Become weary of your Captivity under thoſe *Task-maſters* which have hither to been torturing your ſouls. There are two ſorts of *Tyrants* that every *unregenerate* man is a *Servant* unto; his *Tempers*, and his *Tempters*. Let the *Tempers* within us, no more cauſe us to toil, and run, and ſweat, for the gratifying of them. Let the *Tempters* without us, no more hurry us too & fro, that their Humours may be pleaſed. Souls, I give you no *bad counſil*, when I propound this; and I *do* propound it, *O, Run away from your old maſters*. Come away poor ſouls, come away from the land of your Captivity.

Look

Look upon the grim face of the *Patrons* under which you groan; say to them all, *Farewel, you malicious, you bloody, you sordid Masters, Farewel; We hope you shall* never *have any of our* Service *more*. O look upon the Calamities of your Service under your invisible Adversaries, and say, *'Tis enough!* Say, *The time past may suffice!* Thus, Take ye the *Wings of a Dove*, and flee away.

The Second Counsil.

Bind your selves unto the Service of God by a *Covenant* never to be Forgotten. It was the good Counsil of *Hezekiah*, in 2. Chron. 30. 8. *Yeild your selves unto the Lord*. In the Hebrew Original tis, *Give the Hand unto the Lord*. The giving of the *Hand* was a Rite in the making of a *Covenant*. Men and Brethren, Look *Lionwards*, I beseech you; and say now, *I will join my self to the Lord in a perpetual* COVENANT. Think on the Service which God is to have of you, and be able then to declare, as in *Psal.* 119. 106. *I have sworn it, and I will perform it.* Make a *solemn Covenant*, that you will be the Lord's. Yea, a Written, a Formal, a *subscribed* Covenant for it, has by some been advised and practised. Written and Formal *Indentures* are made between man and man; Why should not there be so between *God* and man? when a Service is to be Entred into. Especially, since tis said, in Isai. 44. 5. *A man shall subscribe*

subscribe with his hand unto the Lord.

In a Sacred *Covenant* say,

I Renounce all the *Vanities* and *Idols* of this World.

I Engage that I will cleave unto the Lord *Jehovah*, as my *Best Good*, and my *Last End*; promising to live *upon* Him, and *unto* Him, hoping ere long to live *with* Him for ever.

I Engage, That I will cleave unto the Lord *Jesus*, as my *Prophet*, and my *Priest*, and my *King*; Promising to acknowledge Him as the Author of all my Salvation.

I Engage, That I will ever study what is my *Duty* in these things; and wherein I find my self to fall short, I will ever count it my *Grief*, my *Shame*, and for pardon betake my self to the Blood of the *Everlasting Covenant*.

All this I Engage, humbly imploring the *Grace* of the Mediator to be *sufficient* for me.

It would hurt no Godly man, to *set* his *Name* with Hand and Heart to such an Instrument; afterwards frequently Reflecting on it, frequently Renewing of it. However, let every man this Day, make this Confession, in *Psal.* 116. 16. *O Lord, truly I am thy* Servant, *I am thy* Servant.

The Third Rule.

And now demean your selves in all things as the *Servants* of God ought to do.

There is a four-fold Concernment that will now lye upon you.

First. Be ſtudious to *know* what *Service* God calleth for. Ly at His Feet, and ſay as *Paul* of old, *Lord, What wouldeſt thou have me to do?* or like *Samuel* once, *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.* Be daily *Reading* of the Word, be daily *Thinking* on the Word: upon every opportunity ſay, *I will hear what God the Lord will ſay.* To all, add That, as your daily Petition unto God; in *Pſal.* 119. 115. *I am thy* ſervant, *O Lord; give me underſtandeng that I may know thy teſtimonies.*

Secondly, Be *ready* to *Do* what *Service* God calleth for. Never object, never cavil againſt any of Gods Commands; never diſpute any thing that He requires; but own, *'Tis all holy, and juſt, and Good.* Be not more undutiful unto *God*, than the *ſervants* of the Centurion were to *him*; If *He* ſay, *Go*, then *go*; if *He* ſay *Come*, then *come*; if *He* ſay, *Do this*, then *do it*, without any Grumbling at it. Say not, *I won't*, altho there be *Hard Sayings* preſſed upon thee. Albeit God may enjoin this, *Pluck out thy* right eye, *cut off thy* right hand; and albeit the Injunction of God may be, *Take up thy Croſs*; yet Comply, yet, Conform, without any Reluctancies; and ſay with him in Pſal. 119. 128. *O Lord, I eſteem all thy precepts concerning all things, to be right.*

Thirdly. Be greatly *Contriving* how to be moſt

most *serviceable* unto God. Ponder well, What you *are*, What you *have*, What you *can*; and Ponder how all may be improved in the *Service* of the Lord. Thus be *Zealous of good Works*. Never be satisfied unless you can say; *I am at work for God.* Let even your *Eating*, your *Recreating*, your *Visiting*, be done as a *Service* for the Lord; and let your *Time*, your *Strength*, your *Estates*, all the *Powers* of your Spirits, and all the *Members* of your bodies, be ingeniously laid out in that *Service*. Often ask your own souls, *What is there that I may do for God?* Even court, and hunt Advantages to be *serviceable*; Say like the Prophet, Isa 6. 8. Say, *Lord, if thou hast any* Service *to be done, here I am, send me.*

Fourthly. Be sweetly *Contented* with all the *Allowances* of the Lord. *John Baptist* gave this Counsel to the *servants* in the *Roman* Garrisons, *Luc.* 3. 14. *Be* content *with your Wages.* The *Servants* in God's Household, have the same Counsel, in Heb. 13. 5. *Be* content *with such things as you have.* Tho you should have but short Commons, and straw lodgings in the world; tho you should be without many Flesh-pleasing Curiosities and Conveniencies, let this quiet you, *I am a* Servant. Don't complain of the Lord, as the slothful and wicked *servant* once, *He is an hard Master.* Let *your* Wills be moulded and melted into *His*; and cheerfully leave Him to judge, What may be *Food* convenient *for you.*

Count that you have *enough*, when God saies, *you shall have no more*; and alwaies have a good Opinion of Gods Disposals. Learn *Pauls* Lesson, *In whatever state to be content.* It is not for *Beggars*, nor *Servants* to be *Choosers*.

This, This tis to be a *Servant* of the Lord. *Blessed is the servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh shall find so doing.*

SECT. VIII.

BUT This is not all that we have to do. We have *Houses* too that we ought to be concerned for. Wherefore,

The Second Exhortation, is

Let us also study to Engage OUR HOUSES in the *Service* of God.

It is the property of every Good man to desire *Company* in the Service of the Lord. O that we might have the Company of all that belong to our *Houses* in it! But

What shall we do?

In short, Would we truly *say* with *Joshua*, *My* House *shall serve the Lord*? We must then *Do* like *Jesus*. *Jesus* the blessed Name-sake, and Antitype of *Joshuah*, hath a Three-fold Office; that of a *Priest*, a *Prophet*, and a *King*. In His *lesser Family* of Disciples once, in His *greater Family* of Believers alwaies, we find Him so. Every Householder should be *all* of this in his own *Family*. Each man pretends to be a *King in his own house*; he should there

be a *Priest*, and a *Prophet* too. There are Three great Cares lying upon us in our *Families*; there is Family-*Prayer*, and Family-*Instruction*, and Family-*Government*. Tis by the Discharge of these three things, that we engage our *Houses* to serve *the Lord*.

Family-PRAYER.

SECT. IX.

FIrst, then. Let *Family-Prayer* be maintained in our *Houses*, that they may *serve the Lord*.

My Neighbours, *I have told you often, and I now tell you weeping*, That it will be a sad thing, if so much as one *Prayerless-Family* be found among you all. The owners of that House will never be able to stand or live in the fiery day of of God's pleading with him. You have been Warned and Warned full many a time, that if your *Houses* be not Warmed with your *Prayers*, the fierce Wrath of God abideth on them; and I hope, none of you will venture to meet me at the Bar of the Lord Jesus, with the fearful heavy guilt of this Omission upon your souls. The very *Turks* themselves at this day uphold a *Family-Worship* among themselves; God forbid that any styled *Christians* here should be worse than *they*.

SECT. X.

THe Method in which I shall treat with you here about, shall be,

I. To offer some *Directions* about *Family-Prayer*.

The First Rule.

Let all *Persons* that should attend *Family-prayer*, count themselves concern'd to *Pray without ceasing*. Every *Master* of an House, is to carry on the *Prayer* in it. That man is not fit to have an *House*, that cannot make a *Prayer*. But if the Master be *absent*? Then the *Mistress* is to see that that *Prayer* be not wanting. It seems assumed of *Esther*, a Woman, in *Cap.* 4. 16. That she *pray'd* with her *Maidens*. There should not be one Prayer the less in a Family, because a *Woman* is become the Ruler there: No, the *Duties* of a Family, should increase the *Prayers* of it. And let the Master of a *Ship*, remember, That the Sailers are his *Family*. He should *pray* with them aboard, every day while they are at Sea together. You that see the *Wonders* of God together, should together sing the *Praises* of God, and together beg the *Mercies* of God. Methinks, the poor *Seamen*, should be the *best men* in the world. With what face can you pray in a *Storm*, if you do not also pray in a *Calm*? Blow *Master*, 'tis *your* Work, 'tis part of your Order from your great *Owner* to see that this be done: For all *Mariners* call upon their *Master*, as those Mariners did upon the Passinger in, Jon. 1. 6. *Arise, call upon thy God, that we perish* not. So the Master of a School also, Remember

ber, That the Scholars are his *Family*; He should *pray* with them, and bless them in the Name of the Highest. God provides *Angels*, and will not you afford *Prayers* for the safety of those *little ones*? We read of some in *Mark*. 10. 13. who *brought young children unto the Lord Jesus Christ*: The Children that are brought to you, by *Parents* or *Guardians*, these are by you to be brought unto the Lord Jesus, that He would lay His Blessing and saving hands upon them. Yea, the *Captain* of a Train'd Band, is to esteem the Souldiers as his *Family*. That good Captain *Cornelius*, could say, in *Act*. 10. 30. *I prayed in my House*. As for those that will not *pray* in the Field, tis to be questioned, whether they will *Fight* there. *Trainings* without *Prayings* are like to degenerate into meer *Debaucheries*. The *Prayerless Captain* gives a very dangerous and desperate Word of Command when he saies, *Follow your Leader*. Briefly, All Superiors generally have a *Family* in the Kind of their Superiority, which they are to attend *Prayers* withal.

The Second Rule.

Let all the *Matters* that would hinder *Family-Prayer* be put *far from our Tabernacles*. There are diverse *Impediments* of our family-Prayers, which we are to be Cautioned against. As now, Let not *family-Fears* hinder family-Prayers. The Apostle saith to them that are in a Condition of Re-

lation; that they should be meek, tender, loving; for this cause in 1. Pet. 3. 7. *That your* Prayers *be not hindred.* If Peace be gone from a family, then Prayer is gone. How can Scolding, and it may be Striking too, agree with Praying, in which we are to *lift up pure hands, without wrath?* Again, Let not family-*Scabs* hinder family-Prayers. *Bad-Members* in a family, often cause that there are *no* Prayers in it. Many men will not *pray*, because others will *scoff* and *flout*: But let your Houses have no such *In-mates*, no such *Ishmaels* in them. It is recorded of *Elisha*, in 2 King. 4. 33. he would not have a *servant* with him, which he could not *pray* withal. If any profane, graceless, Despisers of Prayer, would impose themselves upon us, let us then say to them, *Depart ye workers of iniquity, for I will call upon the Lord.* Once more, Let not *Family-Prayers* be hindred by *unsuitable Times.* The *earlier* we dispatch them, the *easier*. We should not ordinarily let *Business* royl us in the Morning, nor *Drowsiness* drown us in the Evening, before *Family* Prayer be over. As *In every purpose*, thus *to every* Prayer *there is a time and judgment*, and a *wise mans heart will discern it.*

The Third Rule.

Be *frequent* enough, and yet very *serious* in your family-Prayers. Very shameful is their neglect, who have Prayers in their Families but once a day

day. The Apostle saith in *Col.* 4. 2. *Men ought continue in prayer*; he speaks with a manifest Allusion to the *daily Offering* under the Law of old; which was both *morning* and *evening*. We should have *Morning*-Prayers, and *Evening*-Prayers, correspondent unto the *daily Sacrifice*. And hence, because the Sacrifice was doubled on the *Sabbath*, I have known some pious people pray *four times* every *Lords*-Day with their *Families*. Be sure, *Twice* a day is ordinarily the seldomest and slenderest Repetition that our Family-prayers are to have.

O but we should therein *stir up our selves to take hold on God*. When you kneel before the Lord, you should not be rash, hasty, sudden in it; you should not be *sleighty* in this great Exercise of of Religion. Before we pray, we should *think*; Think seriously, *To* WHOM *am I to pray?* and *For* What *am I to Pray?* and *How soon may I* dye, *and my praying seasons all be over?* And before we pray, we should *Read*. Read seriously something of the *Things which are commanded you of God*. The *Scriptures* are to accompany our prayers. Tis said, *They are to* dwell *with us*. The *Bible* is to be one of the *House*. When we betake our selves to our *Prayers*, we should not let the Bible say, *I should have been as one of the Family; pray, why was not I called in?*

The Fourth Rule.

Let not your *Family*-prayers be your only

prayers

prayers. Understand, that *Secret* Prayers, as well as *private* Prayers, are to be performed by us all. For this, the word of our Lord is very positive, in *Matth.* 6. 6. *When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret.* 'Tis a great fondness and folly in any of us, if *private* prayer cause us to lay aside *secret* prayer. No, There is *Closet*-Prayer as well as *Parlour*-Prayer which we ought to labour in. I would say, as our Lord in another case, *One you ought to do; & not leave the other undone.* We have *special Transgressions* to be confessed in our prayers; these are *secretly* to be confessed. To divulge a *secret sin*, is to add a *further sin*. Our *secret sins*, do call for our *secret Prayers*. We have *special Temptations* to be bewailed in our prayers; and these are *secretly* to be bewailed. Our *Desires* are sometimes to be too *secret* for our Neighbours. Our *secret Griefs* and our *secret Fears* call for our *secret Prayers*. And as one of the Ancients elegantly expressed it, *Invisible prayers are to be often made to an invisible God.* *Secret prayer* is one good sign of a *gracious heart*. Let the Lord oft see you like *Nathanael* at *secret prayer* under the fig-tree, and He will say, *Behold an Israelite indeed!* Would you get *Internal* Blessings? then pray in *secret*. *Solomon* got his Wisdom, his Vertue, by *secret prayer*. *Peter* by *secret prayer* in the Dungeon, was carried with Triumph and Rapture

turn into the other world. Would you get External Blessings? Then pray in *secret*. Hannah with *secret prayer* asked one Son, and had six. *Jacob* had all his House preserved by *secret prayer*. Yea, Would you get *General* Blessings? Pray then in *secret*. *Moses* by *secret prayer* diverted wrath & plagues from all the Congregation. That infamous Apostate *Julian*, was killed by the *secret prayer* of a good man, at that hour very far distant from him. What shall I say? *Nec supersedeas*, no Diversion should ever be given to your *secret prayers*.

Moreover, besides your Prayers with all the Family, you may do well sometimes to Retire unto prayers with this or that particular person in it. Some do so translate that passage in Gen. 25. 21. *Isaac entreated the Lord with his wife*. It were but a discreet and a decent practice, for married persons to do *likewise*. Thus, holy Parents, have often taken their Children, *one by one* alone; and there pray'd and wept, and pour'd out their souls, over the *poor Lambs* in secret places before the Lord. Thus are we to do, Thus to *pray*.

SECT. XI.

But the Sluggard will pretend, *A Lion in the way*. Wherefore I pass on,

II. To Remove some *Objections* against *Family-Prayer*.

1. A Threefold *Want* is pleaded by many, to excuse

cuſe their *Prayerleſs* Converſation with; a Want of *Time*, a Want of *Confidence*, and a Want of *Utterance*.

The Firſt Excuſe.

One man doth ſo Excuſe himſelf. *I want* Time *for Family-prayer; eſpecially in a* Morning, *I can't ſpare the* Time.

This is a moſt horrrid and wicked Excuſe. Thou Madman, *From Whom* haſt thou all thy *Time?* *All* thy Time is given by God, and ſhall *None* of thy Time be given *to* God? What, *No Time* to pray with thy Family? God knowes thou canſt find *time* to *eat* with thy family, *time* to *ſleep* with thy family, perhaps, *time* to *ſmoke* with thy family; and no Time to *pray* with em? Once more,

What is it that does engroſs thy *Time*, and put by thy *Prayer*? 'Tis the *World*, the *World*! And is *that* ſuch a Portion indeed, as to beſpeak thy Contempt of an Eternal *GOD*, and of an immortal *Soul*, in the purſuance of it. Thou ſhalt quickly take an everlaſting *Farewel* of all this World; *This World* will not ſtand thee in any ſtead ere long, when thy Soul, thy *Soul* ſhall be trembling on thy cold lips, juſt ready (as the Atheiſt ſaid) to *Take a great leap in the Dark*. Yea, That very Day, wherein thou goeſt abroad without thy *Family Prayers*, may prove the

the very Day, wherein an Angry God may say, *This day shall thy soul be required of thee.* And what a phrensy is this? To be extreme busy & earnest about the trifles of *this* world, while a precious never-dying *soul* is unprovided for? I wish that all *Prayerless Houses*, had this Admonition engraved on their walls, *What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* Could you see it engraved on those *walls*, with an Hand writing, like what *Belshazzer* saw of old, it would no doubt amaze and startle you. Look into these leaves, and see it with a *sharp Style* engraven here! Besides. *Family Prayers* are no real prejudice to *Secular affairs.* They should not be Long, Tedious, Burdensome; and they'le *hinder no Journey*, no concern; all will prosper the better for them. In short; God will find an *Eternity* to *Damn* the man that cannot find a *Time* to *Pray.*

The Second Excuse.

Another man doth so excuse himself, *I want Confidence for Family prayer; I would* pray, *but I am* Asham'd.

This Excuse is little beter. To be ashamed of *Prayer* is to be ashamed of Christ: And it is the plain Word of our Lord JESUS in Mark

Mark 8. 38. *Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed.* O dreadful Doom! Will not such a smart Thunder-clap, cause thee and thy *Family* to fall down upon their knees? Never be asham'd of *Prayer*, but be asham'd of *sin*; 'tis a *sin* to live without *prayer*. If you have any *Scoffers* in your Houses, whom 'tis not fit you should pray before, then do as *Abraham* did; e'en, *Turn 'em out of the doors.* Better Turn *them* out, than Turn *God* out. They that use not *Family-prayer*, say to the Almighty, *Depart from us.*

The Third Excuse.

But the Excuse of some is, *I want* Utterance *for Family-prayer. I would pray, but I am not* gifted *for it. I cannot pray.* To this I answer, we often say, *I cannot*, when *I will not*, is the Bottom of it. Suppose, a severe *penalty* were by the Magistrate laid upon every prayerless Family. *Daniel*, because he *would* pray with his Family was thrown to the *Lions* for it. Suppose a lighter *punishment* far away were to be inflicted on all them who do *not* pray in their Family; Suppose a *Goal*, or a *Fine* were inflicted on you for it: Would you then continue *Prayerless*? Behold, the great God has by the *Statute Lawes* of Heaven, ordeined that a *Prayerless Family* shall have all manner of Calamities inflicted on it; The *Lions*, the *Devils* of the pit below, shall devour the unhappy *Master* of such a Family. And will not

this

this make you *pray*? Besides, When you find that you *Want things*, then you don't want *Words*; the poor man does not *want words*, when he is to *Ask Alms*. O sit down and *look* upon the the *Wants* & *Woes* of your poor Family, you cannot then but have *something to say* for them. And what tho you cannot pray *Quaintly*? Yet you may pray *Gracefully*, and pray *Acceptably*. Florid Elegant *Orations* in your Prayers, God expecteth not; a few humble, penitent, broken-hearted *Groans*, are of more account with Him. Tho you *Chatter like a* Crane *or a Swallow*, as once *Hezekiah* did, yet the success may be wonderful and glorious. What shall I say? *Moses* was unwilling to *do* what God *bade*, on this very Score, in *Exod.* 4. 10. *I am not Eloquent*. But the reply of God was, *Go, and I will teach thee what thou shalt say*. O that you would make a Tryal of it. Friend, By-and-by Call thy *Family* together; Tell them, That you must not let them remain *prayerless* any longer, lest the Wrath of God break out upon them. So Fall down before the Lord among them all, and *pray* as well as God shall enable thee: *go*, I am verily perswaded, *God will* teach *thee what thou shalt say*, I am sure, thou wilt never have cause to Repent of the Attempt.

SECT. XII.

YOu have not so much as a shadow of Reason to render, why you *should not* pray with your

your families. Let me now a little represent why you should; for I am

III. To propound some *Inducements* unto *Family Prayer*.

And there are chiefly Two Considerations which I have to set before you.

Consider, First, the Direful & grievous *Curses* which prayerless *Families* are exposed unto. Such *families* they are the very *Suburbs* of *Hell* it self. A *Prison*, A *Dungeon*, is to be chosen before a Living in them. There is a Word, an awful Word, which a Prophet of God has written in a certain place; Methinks, that Word is like a Thunderbolt of Death upon the *Families* in which God is not prayed unto: It is written in Jer. x. 25. *O Lord, pour out thy fury on the heathen, which know thee not, & on the families which call not on thy name.* Strikes it not cold unto the heart of the Reader? Mark these are the Direful and the direful words of the Lord Jesus Christ himself: He counts the *Prayerless Family* no better than a *Pagan Family*. And now, he speaks not as an *Advocate* for thy poor *Family*; He saies not, *Lord, vouchsafe thy pitty, and thy pardon to that Family*: But He saies, *Lord, pour out thy fury upon that family, because it calls not on thy Name.* Alas, have you no more Kindness for your *Families*, than to lay them open to the *Fury* of a great and a terrible, *cruel people*, that you are. We read

read in *Zech.* 5. begin about a *Flying Roll*, Twenty Cubits *long*, Ten Cubits *broad*, entring into these and those *Houses*, *to consume them*. I am to tell you, That *Prayerless Houses* are to feel the force of this *Flying Roll*. An huge *Roll* of *Curses* belongs to that *House* in which *Prayer* is not upheld. The *Curse* of God is the Sauce in every *Dish*, the *Curse* of God is the Cover to every *Bed*, in that lamentable *Family*. Houses molested with *Devils*, are not more miserable than Houses destitute of *Prayers*. I have seen it in an house, where the *Devils* have had Possession of a Child, that when *Family-Prayer* began, the *Devils* would make hideous Roarings and Noises in the Room, as being under a Vexation thereat, which was intolerable to them. Truly, The Devils have *no* Disturbance in Houses where *Family-prayer* is not maintained; *prayerless* houses are *haunted* houses; and the Fiends of Darkness reign, and ramp, there without Controul. Indeed, *Prayerless Families*, are not only the *Cages*, but also the *Causes* of all Impiety. They bring an Irresistible Deluge of Disorder upon all the Town and Land; and cause all the Countrey to swarm with the *workers of iniquity who call not upon the Lord*. And as the *prayerless Householder* is now *cursed* by God, so he will one day be cursed by all his *House*; he *brings* curses on them, and they will *spend* curses on him, in the Day of Vengeance. In the ever-

burning lake, they will *curse* the day that ever they saw thy *prayerless house*, and, *That House brought me to this Hell!* This, this will be their Cry world without End.

Consider, next, the marvellous *Blessings* which belong to all *Praying Families*. It was noted about the Family of *Obed-Edom*, in 1. Sam. 6. 11. *The Lord blessed* Obed-Edom *and his household*, while the *Ark of the Lord* was there. So shall it be noted about the Family of a *praying Householder*, The Lord will *bless that man and his Household*, while that *Prayer to the Lord* is there. *Family-prayers*, are *conjoined* prayers, and *united* prayers; thus they become very *successful* prayers. What Encouragement is there given to them, in that promise, Matth. 18. 19. *If two of you shall agree on earth, touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them.* O let your Families *Agree* in the Asking of *grace*, in the Asking of *glory*, in the Asking of every *good thing*, *Prayer in Concert*, will obtain it all. When *Cornelius* was at his *Family-prayers*, what a signal favour did the Almighty God show unto him? Some while since a whole Town in *Switzerland* was very suddenly destroyed by an *Earth-quake*, all except one peice of an house, in which a good man happned then to be at *Prayer* with his *Family*. 'Tis impossible to tell, *O how great is the goodness* which God has laid up for Houses that seek unto Him! But besides all this

other

other comforts of a *praying Houſeholder*, he has *This* peculiar to him, *He teacheth all his Family to*. A praying *Parent* will have praying *children*. *David* prayed in his Family, and his Son *Solomon* prov'd a praying young man. A praying *Maſter* will have praying *Servants*. *Abraham* pray'd in his Family, and his Man *Eliezer* became a very praying perſon. Thus, O man, all thy *young people*, will be filling every corner of thy houſe with *Prayers* for thy Felicity. O conſider of theſe things; and ſuch ſet the Impreſſion of them upon you be, That you may by *Prayers* with your *Families* Engage your *Houſes* to *ſerve the Lord*.

SECT. XIII.

THere are two Things more, by the Diſcharge of which, we Engage our *Houſes* to *ſerve the Lord*; and thoſe *Two* are in a manner *One*

Family-Inſtruction;
and
Family-Government.

I link theſe together, becauſe of their near Dependance and Agreement in their Exerciſe. This therefore is the Addreſs now to be made unto us,

Let *Family-Inſtruction* and ſo *Family-Government* be maintained in our *Houſes*, that they may *ſerve the Lord*.

Let there be no *untaught* and *unrul'd* Families among

among us; but let us be careful about the *Education* of such as belong to our Families. I beseech you, let there be a difference between *English Houses* and *Indian Wigwams* in the middest of us, and let not *English* Parents be as indulgent and negligent as they report the *Indians* are. And give me leave to say, You that are *Mothers* have a special Advantage to instil the Fear of God into the souls of them that sit upon your knees. Tis said in Prov. 1. 8. *My son, forsake not the law of thy* Mother. *Solomon* was well instructed by his *Mother*, and it proved his eternal Benefit. Tis not for Nothing, that in the *Sacred Records*, when men have proved *good* or *bad*, it is noted, Their *Mothers* were such and such. You that are *Mothers* may insinuate Religion into your Children earlier and easier than their *Fathers* can.

SECT. XIV.

I shall Repeat the Method, which we were in before; and under *Family-Instruction* take in that *Family-Government* which you are to be studious of. I am

I. To offer some *Directions* about *Family-Instruction.*

The *Directions* to be given hereabout, may be referr'd unto two Heads.

First, The *Matter* of Family Instruction.

The *Family-Instruction*, with which we urge

our

our houſes to the Service of God, are to have no leſs than Four things compoſing of it.

First, There are Holy *Leſſons*, with which we are to *Inſtruct* our *Families*. We are to make them *hear*, and make them *learn* thoſe *Leſſons*, which may *give to the young ones Knowledge and Diſcretion*. Teach them the *Scriptures* of Truth. Twas ſaid to *Timothy*, in Cap. 3. 15. *From a* Child *thou haſt known the Holy Scriptures*; No doubt, his Godly Mother and Grandmother were the cauſe of his doing ſo. We ſhould procure that our *Young* ones may *read* the *holy Scriptures*, and *mind* the *holy Scriptures*, and *know* the *holy Scriptures*, even *from a Child*. Let them have by heart, here and there a *Verſe*, or a *Paragraph*; Eſpecially in the *Pſalms* and in the *Proverbs*: if you would have them *good*, teach them the *Pſalmes* of *David*; if you would have them *wiſe*, teach them the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*. And Scripture-*Stories* are to be told unto them, as ſoon as ever they enquire after *new* things and *ſtrange*.

But while we do thus, we are alſo to teach them the *Doctrines* of God. Inculcate upon them the *Principles of Religion*, as often as you do the Knife on the Stone in the *Whetting* of it. Twas ſaid unto the Lord Jeſus, in Matth. 22. 16. *Maſter, Thou teacheſt the way of God in Truth.* Every *Maſter* ſhould render his *young* ones able to ſay that unto himſelf, *Maſter, Thou teacheſt*

teacheſt the Truth of God. Eſpecially, We ſhould be ſure that they be not ignorant of any *Saving* Truths: Tell them, What they *are* come to by the *Firſt Adam*, and what they *may* come to by the *Second Adam*. Tell them what *Covenant* man was once, and What Covenant man is *now* to be ſaved by. Yea, let none of the Things to be *believed*, none of the Things to be *practiſed*, none of the Things to be *pray'd for*, be left unmentioned in your Inſtructions. All the *Leſſons* of the *Creed*, the *Commandments*, and the *Lords Prayer* are to be laid before them. And we are to be particularly faithful to them, in the *preſent Truths*; the *labouring* Truths, the *witneſſed* Truths of the Times, we ſhould ſee our young ones well informed in. Give them *at this day* to be ſenſible, who is the Supreme *Head*, and *King* of the Church, and what *Orders* He has appointed to be obſerved there.

Secondly. There are ſerious *Queſtions* with which we are to *Inſtruct* our *Families*. And there are peculiarly Two Things which we are to *queſtion* our young ones about.

Some *Queſtions* we are to put unto them,

Firſt, Which Concern their *Souls*.

And here, yet further to particularize, We are to try them with *Queſtions* about their *Underſtanding*. Our Lord Jeſus asked his Diſciples, in Matth. 13. 51. *Have ye* underſtood *all theſe things?* Thus are we to ask our young people,

Do

Do you understand *the great Mystery of Godliness?* O keep up the great Ordinance of *Catechising* in your houses. Before your little Folks have left off living upon *Milk*, let them be so well versed in their *Milk for Babes*, that they may readily answer any Question there. The *Echoes* of this Exercise, are a most refreshing Melody in the ears of God himself. Ask we our young ones, What they think of *God*, and of *Christ*, and of *Themselves*; and let them be able to resound the *Words of Truth*.

We are to search them also with *Questions* about their *Experience*. As our Lord asked His Family, in Joh. 16. 31. *Do ye now believe?* So should we ask our young people, *Have you* Experienced *a work of* Regeneration *in your souls?* Ask them, *Have you ever yet carried a labouring and heavy-laden soul unto the Lord Jesus Christ?* It was the Advice of Wisdom, *Know the state of thy Flocks*. Thus, we should endeavour to *Know the state of the Souls* which we are to be concerned for; to *know* whether they are in a *Natural*, or a *Renewed* state.

Once more, We are to help them with *Questions* about their *Temptations*. It was a *Question* once given to some, in Luc. 24. 38. *Why do Thoughts arise in your hearts?* Even so we should Enquire of our young people, *What* Thoughts *are you most troubled with?* Enquire, what *Fears*, enquire what *Snares* they are most endangered

by. Be alwaies jealous, leſt *as the ſerpent beguiled Eve*, ſo their *minds be corrupted*. Moreover Some *Queſtions* we are to put upon them, Secondly, which concern their *Lives*. It was once an Interrogatory which ſome were put unto, in Luc. 23. 17. *What manner of communications have ye?* Thus we are to Examine our young people about the *Words* and the *Works*, that fill their Lives. There are eſpecially three things which they ſhould be Examined about; their *Prayer*, their *Time*, and their *Company*. Ask them, whether they live without *Prayer* or no? Whether in Prayer they ſecretly and ſincerely pour out their ſouls before the Lord? Ask them, How they ſpend their *Time*? How much *Idle Time*, and how much *uſeful* Time, they allow unto themſelves? And ask them, What their *Company* is? Whom they ſit withal? Whether *vain Perſons* and *Fools*, or *the Saints which are the excellent*, and *all thoſe that fear God*? Our Queſtion will prove their *Safeguard*, if it be well adminiſtred.

Thirdly, There are faithful *Reproofs* with which we are to *Inſtruct* our *Families*. Tis ſaid in Prov. 6. 33. *The* Reproofs *of Inſtruction are the way of life*. When we give *Inſtruction*, we ſhall have occaſion to give *Reproof*, too often with it. There is no *Family* that has not Miſcarriages that are to be *reproved* in it. *Young* people too commonly are *wild* people; and without

out ſome *Caſtigations* they will rarely be kept in order. To ſome of them ſmart *Words*, to others of them ſmart *Blowes*, will be too often due. Tis ſaid in Prov. 13. 24. *He that ſpareth his Rod hateth his ſon; but he that loveth him, chaſtens him betimes.* *Frowns* are due to all, and *Rods* to ſome Tranſgreſſors in the Family. But there are two Negative and two Poſitive Rules to be minded in *Reproving* of them.

The Negative Rules are theſe two.

Firſt, *Reprove* not *Furiouſly*. It is ſaid in *Jam.* 1. 20. *The wrath of man, worketh not the righteouſneſs of God.* Remember, Nothing will be ſo well done *in* a paſſion, but what may be done better *out* of it. If you are to *chide*, yet chide not in a *Fury*. Do not call *vile Names*; much more, do not *ſwear*, do not *curſe*, do not Rage with a *Tongue ſet on fire of hell*. If you are to *ſmite*, yet ſmite not in a *Fury*. Bloody, wounding, outragious Buffettings are to be avoided; leſt there be cauſe to ſay of you, *Curſed is their Anger for it is fierce, and their Wrath for it is cruel.*

Secondly *Reprove* not *for ever*. Tis ſaid in *Pſ.* 103. 9. *God will not* alwaies *chide, neither will He keep his anger for ever.* To be *alwaies* finding faults, is the way *never* to be curing them. A *perpetual Warngling* is a *continual Dropping*, which there is no enduring of; it prejudices the minds of them that feel it, againſt all that ſhall

be ſaid unto them.

The *Poſitive* Rules are theſe Two.

Firſt, Reprove *Reaſonably*. Let there be *juſt* Cauſe for it. When you *reprove*, it muſt be for a *true cauſe*. As it was ſaid of our Saviour in *Iſai.* 11. 3. *He ſhall not reprove after the hearing of His ears.* Thus, we may not go by meer *Hear-ſay*, when we reprove thoſe that are under us. And it muſt be for a *great* Cauſe. Tis ſaid of the Spirit in *Joh.* 16. 8. *He will reprove the world for SIN.* The ſinful thing, the thing for *which the wrath of God comes*, the thing which the *ſoul of the Lord hates*, this we are to reprove. We muſt not throw away *Reproofs* upon *Nothing*, or upon *Every thing*.

Secondly, Reprove *Scripturally*. Tis ſaid in 2. Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is profitable for Reproof.* A *Reproof* with a *Scripture* comes with a more than ordinary Majeſty and Authority. When we Reprove thoſe that are under us, Firſt, make them read a *Text* which does Condemn what we would rebuke, and then ſet it home with a very warm ſively vigorous Application.

Fourthly, There are ſolemn *Charges* with which we are to *Inſtruct* our *Families*. It was the Character which the Lord gives of *Abraham*, in Gen. 18. 19. *I know him, that he will* command *his children and his* houſehold *after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord.* O that this might

be

be ſaid of every *Houſholder* here; *I know him, that he will take all of his houſe, one by one, and* Charge *every one of them to keep the way of the Lord!* What ſaies the Apoſtle, in 1. Thes. 2. 11. *We* charged *every one of you, as a father his children.* We ſhould call aſide our *young* peop'e, and lay upon them, the Charge of *David*, in 1. Chron. 28. 9. *My ſon, know thou the God of thy Father, and* Serve Him *with a perfect Heart and a willing mind; for the Lord ſearcheth all Hearts; if thou ſeek Him, He will be found of thee, if thou forſake Him, He will caſt thee off for ever.*

Charge them; and this eſpecially about four Things. Lay upon them that *Charge* of God in 1. Joh. 3. 23. *This is His Commandment, that you believe on the Name of his Son.* Charge them to accept of Chriſt Jeſus, as their *Prince* and their *Saviour*; Charge them to repair unto Chriſt Jeſus for *Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.* Lay alſo upon them that Charge of God, in Mat. 6. 6. *Enter into thy Cloſet and pray to thy Father in ſecret.* Charge them to Retire for their *Devotions* every day; Charge them to let not a day paſs them, without Crying to *God* for His Mercy, and Pardon, and Salvation. Once more, Lay upon them that *Charge* of God, in Prov. 1. 10. *My ſon, if Sinners entice thee, conſent thou not,* Charge them, that they be not the *Companions of Fools*; Charge

them that they do not associate themselves into an Intimacy and a Familiarity with any but such as may be sober, discreet, blameless persons. Finally, Lay upon them that *Charge* of God in Hag. 1. 5. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts*, Consider your waies. Charge them, that they *Consider* what their present Condition is, and what their future Condition is *like* to be; Charge them, that they *consider* of their past Behaviours, and of the *Death*, and *Judgment*, and *Eternity* which is yet before them. A young man has become a real Convert by being obliged unto *Consideration* for one Quarter of an Hour in a Day. Wish for them, say to them, *Oh that they were wise, that they would* Consider! In a word, Let your Charge on them, be that, which Holy *Bolton* gave to his Children, when he dyed, *I charge you, that at the Day of Judgement, none of you dare to meet me in an* Unregenerate *estate.*

Secondly. The *Manner* of *Family-Instruction.*

'Tis to be performed in such a *Manner*, as may best Attain the Ends of it. Particularly.

First, We are to *Instruct* our Families very *Seasonably.* We are told in Matth. 24. 45. The *Ruler over the Household* is to *give them their meat in due* Season. There lies much in the *Time* we take for the *Work.* We should indeed have our *Frequent* Times, to do it: We should speak what may be for the *Instruction* of our Families,

every

every day, and often in a day; and on various occaſions be dropping our ſavoury Admonitions. Even when we ſit at the *Table*, we ſhould rarely Riſe without feeding the *Minds*, as well as the *Mouthes* of our Attendents. Much more at the *Hours of Prayer*, we ſhould do ſomething that may make them more acquainted with *Divine Objects* than they were before. But we ſhould likewiſe have our *Stated* Times to do it. Eſpecially *Sacred* Time will be very properly a *Stated* Time for it. On the *Dayes* of the Lord, we ſhould inſtruct our Houſes in the *Things* of the Lord; *that* were infinitely better than to be Sleeping or Talking at an idle rate, as then too many do.

But about the *Stated Time* for *Family-Inſtruction*, there is a double Diſcretion to be uſed. It is to be diſpatched in a *Quiet* Time, in a Time when there is no Diſturbance by *Paſſions* within, or *Noiſes* without. It is ſaid in Eccleſ. 9. 16. *The words of wiſe men are heard in quiet*: and no *wiſe man* will ſpeak when there is not *Quietneſs* enough to allow an Audience for him. And it is to diſpenſ'd in a *Lively* Time, in a Time when *Spirits* are ſtirring, and *Affections* are vigorous. Tis ſaid in Rom. 12. 11. *Be* fervent *in ſpirit, ſerving the Lord*; thus, this piece of *Service* for the Lord, is to be done, when there is a *Fervency* of Diſpoſition thereunto.

Secondly

Secondly, We are to *Instruct* our *Families* very *pertinently*. Accommodate our *Instructions* to their *Conditions*.

Are there any *Unconverted* persons in our *Families*? Let them be *Suitably* Instructed. Say to them as in Psal. 34. 11. *Hearken to me and I will Teach you the Fear of the Lord.* Let them be *warned* of the *Dangers* which do threaten their miserable souls; and let them be *stirred* to the *Duties* that may lay them at the Pool, in the *way* of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Are there any *Converted* persons in our Families? Let *them* too be *suitably* Instructed. We read in Joh. 8. 31. *Jesus said unto the Jewes which* believed *on Him*, continue *in my word.* Let them be quickned to *continue* in their Faith, and Love and Zeal. Let them have *Weapons* to furnish them against all their Difficulties, and *Cordials* to Revive them under all their Discouragements.

Are there any *Unfruitful* Souls, in our Families? Instruct them *suitably*, by setting before them what is the Doom of the Barren *Tree*, and of the Barren *Ground*; even, to be *cut down*, and *burnt up* for ever. And say, *O glorifie your heavenly Father by bringing forth much fruit.*

Are there any *Back-sliding* Souls, in our Families? Instruct them *suitably*, by setting before them the *Displeasure* of God at such as *draw back*, and His extreme Wrath on them whose

Goodness

Goodneſs is as the *Morning cloud* and *the early dew*; and ſay, *Remember whence thou art fallen, repent, and do thy firſt works.* Thus are we to ſuit the the caſe of thoſe whom we give Inſtruction to.

Thirdly. We are to *Inſtruct* our Families very *Diligently.* Tis a thing that we are to *labour* in. Twas enjoin'd in Deut 6. 7. *The words which I command thee, thou ſhalt teach them* Diligently *unto thy Children.* It calls for our *Hearts* and our *Pains.* When we ſet about it, we ſhould think with our ſelves, *We know not how ſhort our Opportunities may be; we know not whether we ſhall ever ſpeak more to thoſe whom we now direct our ſelves unto.* In this as well as in other ſuch Caſes, we ſhould hear the voice of our own *Uncertainty* & *Mortality*; tis that in *Eccleſ.* 9. 10. *Do with thy might what thy hand finds to do, for there is no work, nor wiſdom in the grave whither thou art going.* Tis the *Work of the Lord*, about which we are, when we are, *Inſtructing* our Families, tis not to be done *ſlothfully*; we find in *Jer.* 28. 10. *curſed is the man, who* doth it ſo; tis to be done *heartily*; we find in 2. *Chron.* 31. 21. that is the way to *proſper* in it. O let us be as *Diligent* in *Inſtructing* of our young people, as the Emiſſaries of Hell are in Seducing of them.

Fourthly, We are to *Inſtruct* our Families by *Exemple.* Be *Exemplary*; and follow the Directory of that geat man, who ſaid in Pſal. 101. 10. *I will walk within my houſe with a perfect heart.*

Let

Let our *Walk*, as well as our *Talk*, ſhow the young people with us how they are *to walk and to pleaſe God*; and let us be able to call upon them, *Do you follow me, as I follow Chriſt.* Let us give ſuch Expreſſions of *Love* to God and his *Truths* and His *Wayes*, that our Families may come after us in the like. Let them diſcern how to ſeek the *Face* of God, and how to bear the *Hand* of God, and how to prize the *Word* of God, by ſeeing how *We* do it our ſelves. When *Eliſha* would get for himſelf *a double Portion* of the ſpirit in *Elijah*, he ſaid in 2. King 2. 10. *If thou ſee me, it ſhall be ſo unto thee.* O that the *Sight* of us, that the *Sight* of our Piety, and Gravity might *Inſtruct* our Houſes, and help them to a *double Portion* of thoſe Graces and Vertues which are *the Fruits of the Spirit.* We ſhou'd ſtudy an *Inſtructive Converſation*; and we ſhould never permit a *Cham*, a young *Cham* in our families, to ſee us overcome with *Drink*, Diſguiſed with *Vice*, or naked with *Folly*; but *In all things we ſhould ſhow our ſelves a* Pattern *of good works.*

Fifthly. We are to Inſtruct our Families with *Authority.* As the *Miniſter* is to imitate the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, of whom tis ſaid in *Mat.* 7. 29. *He taught as one having Authority.* So ſhould the *Houſeholder* do. And hence we are to keep up our *Authority* in our families; not permitting *the child to be have himſelf proudly a-*

gainſt

gainſt the Ancient. It is required in Lev. 19. 3. *Ye ſhall fear every one his* Mother *and his Father*; the *Mother* is here put before the Father, Becauſe commonly ſhe firſt loſeth her *Authority*: but neither *Mother* nor *Father* ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be trampled upon. Tis an intolerable thing, for a ſaucy, impudent, unmannerly child to reply, *I wont*, when a Parent bids him do this or that. You ſin grievouſly, if you do not curb and break the *Wills* of them that you are to bring up in the *nurture of the Lord*; and if you don't make 'em tremble to *break* any of your *commands*. Wherefore let there be that *Wiſdom*, that *Meekneſs*, that *Reſervedneſs*, and *Seriouſneſs* in our Deportments, with which we may *Rule well our own houſe, and have our* Children *in* Subjection *with all gravity*. This is that *Family-Inſtruction* and Family-*Government* by which we muſt bring our *Houſes* to *ſerve the Lord*.

SECT. XV.

ONe might Rationally imagine, that no Exception could be taken at ſuch a profitable and neceſſary thing as *Family Inſtruction* is. Yet *this* alſo has Exceptions made againſt it; and therefore I am endeavouring

II. To Remove ſome *Objections* againſt Family Inſtruction.

Diverſe things are by many pleaded, wherefore they take no care to have their *Families* partakers of *Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs*.

The First Exception.

One person will for this Plea Exempt himself. *The Inferiors in my Family are very* Dull: *'Tis an hard thing to beat into them, any sense of* Eternal *Concernments.*

On this Pretense it is, that poor *Negro's* especially are kept Strangers to the *way of Life*: they are kept only as *Horses* or *Oxen*, to do our Drudgeries; but their *Souls*, which are as white and good as those of other Nations, their *Souls* are not look'd after, but are *Destroyed for lack of Knowledge*. This is a desperate Wickedness. But are they *dull?* Then *instruct* them the *rather*; That is the Way to *sharpen* them. 'Tis said in *Psal.* 119. 130. *The Entrance of thy word gives* Understanding *to the* Simple. Be they never so *simple*, you may increase their *Wit* by God's *Word*. And are they truly *Dull?* Then be not *you* so too; Let your *Labour* be equal to their *Dulness*. We are told in *Eccl.* 10. 10. *If the Iron be* blunt, *then a man must put to the more Strength*. You must be at the Trouble to stoop unto their *Capacities*. Be you as *plain*, be you as *brief* in your *Instructions*, as they are *dull* in their *Intellectuals*. And be *frequent*, be *patient* in them; give *Line upon line, and Precept upon precept; here a little and there a little*. Even *Gutta cavat lapidem* ---- *a Stone* will receive the mark of the Drop that shall often fall upon it.

The

The Second Exception.

Another person will for this Cause Exempt himself.

The Inferiors in my Family are very Young. *Tis too soon to begin with them; we shall only make them* take the Name of God in vain *by teaching them to* talk like Parrots *of Religion, before they can conceive better of it.*

To this I answer, *No*, You can't begin with them *Too soon.* 'Twas said in *Isai.* 28. 9. *Whom shall hee teach knowledge? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts.* They are no sooner *wean'd* but they are to be *taught*; and God may give them righter and riper Conceptions of things, than you are well aware. What saies the Wise man, *Train up a* Child *in the way he should go.* Let the first liquor that is put into them be sweet and good; and they will keep the *tang* of it all their dayes. *Quo semel est imbuta recens* --

Are they *Young?* Yet the *Devil* has been with them already. 'Tis said in Psal. 58. 3. *They go astray as* soon as they are born, *speaking lies.* They no sooner *step* than they *stray*, they no sooner *lisp* than they *ly.* Satan gets them to be proud, profane, reviling and revengeful, as *young* as they are. And, I pray, Why should not you be afore-hand with *him?* And this the rather, since the Lord Jesus calleth for them. He saies

in Marc. 10. 13. *Suffer* little *children to come unto me.* For know, 'Tis not an *Affront*, but an *Honour* unto the Name of God, for such *young* ones to *Learn the truth as it is in Jesus.* It was very pleasing unto the Lord Jesus Christ, when in Matth. 21. 15. *The* Children *cryed Hosannah* to Him. If your Children do not cry *Hosanna*, they will call wicked *Names*, they will curse and lie, and take the Name of God in vain; and which is best? *Judge ye.* Besides we have the Call of God, in Psal. 148. 12. *Ye* Children, praise *the Lord.*

The Third Exception.

A Third person will urge this against it.

I want Abilities *to mange this work, my Parts and Gifts are too mean to go thro it.*

To this I answer; God will *Accept* you, tho you do it meanly. The Prophet made this Apology for himself, in Jer. 1. 6. *Ah! Lord God, I cannot speak.* But God answered, *Say not so.* Tho you have but *one Talent*, yet let it not ly by. Though you have only *Goats hair*, or *Badgers skins*, yet employ *them* for the use of the *Tabernacle.* The Apostle tells the Hebrews, *You need one to teach you the* first principles *of the Oracles of God*; yet unto them he said, *Exhort one another.*

Moreover, God will *Assist* you to do it better. Twas affirmed to him in *Joshua* 1. 9.

Have

Have not I commanded thee? Be ſtrong and of a good Courage, for the Lord *thy God is with thee.* Thus be it affirmed here; God has *commanded* thee, Do it as courageouſly and as comfortably as thou canſt: His *Preſence* will continually cauſe thee to grow in thy Accompliſhments *To him that* hath *ſhall be given.* Keep *watering* the *Olive-plants* about thy Table. *He that* watereth *ſhall be* watered *alſo himſelf.*

The Fourth Exception.

A Fourth perſon perhaps will not bluſh to ſay, *I want* Opportunity *to attend this Work; my Employment will not ſuffer me.*

But let no man argue ſo. Man, haſt thou Time to *Feed* thy Family and no time to *Teach* them? The pooreſt among you all ſhould ſay, as in Pſa. 119. 72. *The Law of thy mouth is better to me, than thouſands of Gold and ſilver.* Tis better to lay up for thy Family the Riches of *God's Law*, than Thouſands of pounds. Nothing, nothing ſhould put by their *Inſtruction* in the *way of peace.* If you do not want an *Heart*, you will not want a *Time* for the *Inſtruction* of your Families. No man could have more buſineſs lying on his hands than *David* had, who had the Affayrs of a mighty Kingdom to diſtract him; yet of him could his own Son ſay as in Prov. 4. 4. *He taught me.*

The Fifth Exception.

Tis poſſible a fifth perſon may have uncomfortable cauſe to plead, *I have*

I have those in my Family that will not be Instructed; *I can't* Order *them so far as to make them submit unto it.*

In this unhappy Case, What shall be done but this? We are to pray for these Creatures, that their *Hearts* may be tam'd and bow'd by Him, that has them in His Hand. We are also to watch when some *Affliction* or some *Amazement* is come upon them: then God *opens their ear to Discipline*; then the *Wild Asses* are *in the Month* where you may *find them.* We may likewise call in the help of some grave, pious, holy Minister, who may come to them with the spirit and power of *Elias*, To *turn the hearts of the* Children *to their* Fathers.

Finally. If your *Children* refuse to be Instructed, What saies the Wise man, *A* Rod *for the fools back*. If your *Servants* refuse to be Instructed, What saies the Good man, *He that worketh deceit* shall not dwell *within my house.*

SECT. XVI.

BEfore I have done, I must Endeavour

III. To propound some *Incentives* unto *Family-Instruction.*

Wherefore

Consider, first, the *Needfulness* of it. Christians, Instruct your Families, for I may say, *This is the Will of* God *in* Christ Jesus *concerning you.* And as Gods *Will*, so their *State* calleth

calleth for it. O look upon the *Ignorance* of your Families. May it not be ſaid of them as in Pſal. 14. 2. *The Lord looked on the Children --- to ſee if there were any that did underſtand; they are all gone aſide.* Inſtruct them; leſt they be *deſtroyed for lack of knowledge.* Look upon the *Corruption* of your Families. May it not be ſaid of them, as in Eccleſ. 5. 3. *The hearts of the Children* is *full of Evil.* Inſtruct them, leſt they be the *Children of* Belial, to *conſume your* eyes *and grieve your* hearts.

In a Word, Inſtruct your Families or elſe the *Blood* of their Souls will be required at your hands. It was complain'd of old, in Jer. 2. 34. *In thy ſkirts is found the blood of the ſouls of poor innocents.* What a dreadful word is that! and what a dreadful *thing* will it be, for your poor Families to follow you in the ever-burning Lake below; ſhrieking and roaring, *If you had done* your Duty *to us, tis like we had never arrived here!*

Conſider, Secondly the *Uſefulneſs* of it. Inſtruct your *Families* and it will iſſue in *their Good.* They ſhall be brought home to God. As he ſaid in Pſal 51. 13. *I will* teach *them, and they ſhall be* converted *unto thee.* You may ſee *converted* Children, and *converted* Servants, filling of your Families. They may bleſs the name of God for ever, that ever they knew your *Houſe*, or ſaw your *Face*; becauſe you have promoted

promoted in them that *Knowledge* which is *Life Eternal*.

Inſtruct your *Families*; and it will iſſue in *your Joy*. They ſhall afford you that ſight, of which the Apoſtle ſaid, *I have no greater Joy*. Tis ſaid in Prov. 10. 1. *A wiſe Son makes a glad Father*. Tis a *taught* ſon that proves a *wiſe* ſon. What a joyful thing will it be, for you to ſee all your Children and Servants, calling you their *ſpiritual Father*, here! But what a much-more joyful thing will it be for you to meet them all at the *Right Hand* of our Lord in the day of His Appearing!

O Conſider of theſe Things; and go away determined, [I hope you are *now* determined] *Thus I and my* Houſe *will* ſerve *the Lord*.

Time

TIME DISCERNED.

ECCLES. VIII. 5.

A wise man's heart discerneth TIME.

THE Famous *Writer* of these Words was that Royal *Preacher*, *Solomon*. After much *Experience* of the *World*, and after much *Repentance* for that Experience, he drew up a Treatise *De summo bono*, concerning the *chief Good* of man. The penitent and inspired Monarch, having arrived unto the *Top* of this world, pitties the poor men whom he sees toiling and sweating to get up the rocky hill after him, and expecting to find *Happiness* there; & with a loud voice he gives this warning to them, *Sirs, You will be all* mistaken, *you will meet with* nothing *but* Vanity *and* Vexation *here*.

The Context here contains the Reflections of this wise prince on the *Commencement* which he had

had given to publick and open Idolatry in *Israel*, and the *compliance* which they that should have advised the contrary yeilded thereunto. Men *seek out many inventions* to excuse themselves from bearing an humble but a *faithful Testimony* against any sinful thing which their Superiors may invite them to. One of these *Inventions* is mentioned in the fourth verse of this Chapter; it is drawn from the *Uncontrouleable Power* of them that sometimes enjoin a sinful thing. To this Excuse we have a two-fold Answer in the fifth verse. We have two things in it. First, the Good of *Religion*. Tis said, *Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing*. q. d. Be true to Gods Commandments & thy own Conscience, let who will be offended at it; the wonderful providence of the Almighty will in the mean time be concerned for thy Safety and Security. A man gets no real Hurt by doing of his Duty. Secondly, the Need of *Discretion*. Tis said *A wise mans heart discerneth both* Time *and Judgment*. q. d. In the doing of this, and every other Duty, two things are to be much regarded. Mind the *Season* of the duty, and mind the *Manner* of the duty: much harm will thereby be prevented in discharging of it. Tis the former of these two Regardables that I would now insist upon. Behold a *general* Rule apply'd unto a *particular* Case: the Case is, *the Rebuking and Refusing of Sin*; but the Rule is, *A wise*

man

man always will diſcern *his time to do what he has to do.* To *Diſcern* the Time, --- it muſt needs alſo ſignifie to *Improve* the Time. Wherefore the *Doctrine* is,

A wiſe man will diſcern *and* improve *his* Time, *to do what is incumbent on him.*

Our *Propoſitions* are to be ſuch as theſe.

Prop. I.

The Bleſſed God affordeth to men in this World a *Time* to diſcharge the Duties incumbent on them. There are two things incumbent on us; to *Do* good, and to *Get* good. The good we are to *do*, is to *Honour* God; and the good we are to *get*, is to *Enjoy* God. Thoſe two things compriſe all our *Duties*; and they make up the *Errand* which we come into the World upon. Now, while we are in this world, God allowes us a *Time* for this work; we have *time* not only in the larger ſenſe of it, but alſo in the ſtricter ſenſe of it; We have *time* not only in *Duration*, but alſo in *Opportunity*. There is not any *Duty* enjoined upon us, but there is a *Seaſon* for it allowed unto us. Tis an Obſervation about the things that *ſhall* be, in Eccleſ. 3. 1. *To every thing there is a* Seaſon, *and a* Time *to every purpoſe.* Thus it may be ſaid about the things that *ſhould* be, *There is no* Duty, *but God hath provided us a* Time *and a* Seaſon *for it.* We have ſome *golden ſpots of Time*, whereof we may ſay, *This is the*

Time *for such a duty*; and again, *This is the* Time *for another duty.*

First, We have a *Time* to *do Good* while we are here in the world. We have a *time* to exercise every *Vertue*, to use all that *Piety* and *Charity*, all that *Holiness* & *Righteousness*, which the Lord requireth of us. The *Good* which we are to *do* is expressed in *Mic.* 6. 8. *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is* good, *to do* justly, *and to* love Mercy, *and to* walk humbly *with thy God.* We meet with many *Times* to do those *Good things* before we dye. We have now our *Time* to acquaint our selves with God, in all the methods of Devotion; our *Time* to acknowledge God in all the waies of New Obedience. We have also our *Time* to advantage our Neighbours; our *Time* to promote the internal and eternal *Salvation*, and the external *Prosperity* of them that are about us.

Secondly, We have likewise a *Time* to *Get Good* while we are in the world. We have a *Time* to obtain all that *Favour*, and all that *Fellowship* with God which our Mighty Redeemer is the Authour of. The Good which we are to *get*, is comprised in Isai. 55. 3. *The sure Mercies of David.* We have our *Times* to secure all those *Good things*. Every man of us may say, *I have a* Time *to get my Sin pardoned*; he may say, *I have a* Time *to get my Soul renewed*; he may say, *I have a* Time *to get all the* Promises *of the* New

New Covenant *fulfilled unto my soul for evermore.*

Prop. II.

It is no small part of *Wisdom* for men to *discern* and *improve* the *Time* which God affordeth unto them. When the Gales of *Opportunity* blow in the Sails of *Time*, every man should see and watch his own *Opportunity*. To *Discern* the Time, is to *mind* the time, and to *use* the time, for the performance of our *Duty*. Now tis a *wise* man that will so *discern* the *Time*. *Sapience* or *Wisdom* is a Vertue of the *Understanding*, whereby a man perceives the *Dependence* of things; the *Connexion* of things, and the *Consequence of things* being understood, therein *Wisdom* is discovered. To *discern the time* is an instance of this. Tis *Wisdom* for a man to lay his *Time* and his *Work* together. Tis *Wisdom* for a man to fore-see what will be the Issue of such a *Work* at such a *Time*. But besides the *Nature* of *Wisdom* evidently appearing in this thing, we have a two-fold further [illegible]ness to the *Wisdom* of it.

First, The *Testimony* of *Scripture* there about, shewes, that it is *Wisdome* for men to *discern* and *improve* their *time*. What the all-*wise*, the only-*wise* GOD calleth *Wisdom*, is unquestionably to be esteemed so. The *Redeeming* of *Time* is great Wisdom in the Language and the Account of God. Twas said in Eph. 5. 16. *Walk as* wise, Redeeming *the time* --- Much of the same *Date*

and *Tenour*, was the Epistle to the *Colossians*. In that Epistle also we have the like passage, in Cap. 4. 5. *Walk in* Wisdom, Redeeming *the time*. Tis probable the Apostle therein has a special Reference to Persecutions, which good men were then exposed unto. To *Redeem the Time*, was a proverbial Phrase of old, signifying, To *Keep out of trouble as long as one can*. Thus the *Chaldean* Soothsayers were told in their distress, *Dan.* 2. 8. *I know that ye would* gain *the time*. This was the Counsil of the Apostle, *By a prudent, holy, careful, and inoffensive Carriage towards them that would interrupt you in the worship of Jesus Christ*, gain Time *what you can for the quiet practice of it*. Well, If it be *Wisdom* to *gain* time *for* the Service of God, surely, tis Wisdom to *spend* time *in* the Service of God. It was the singular Character & Commendation of the *Issacharites*, in 1. Chron. 12. 32. *They had* Understanding *in the* times, *to* know *what Israel ought to do*. Tis an *understanding* man, who doth so *know* his *Time*, as to *do* his *Work*. Of a *Time-losing* man, the Scripture saith, *He is a Fool*. It saies in Prov. 18. 16 *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a* Fool?

Secondly, The *Prevention* of *Sorrow* thereby, shewes, That it is *Wisdom* for men to *discern* and *improve* their *Time*. It is great *Wisdom* to prevent great *Sorrow*. Now nothing in the world fills the heart of man more with Anguish

and

and Anger, than the *Missing* of Time. When a man has missed his Time for his *Work*, it causeth an unspeakable Regret within him. We read of some professors, who missed their time to Entertain Christ Jesus and His Mercy: with what a marvellous Agony did they cry out, in Matth. 25. 11. *Lord, Lord, open to us!* Well might they be called *Foolish*, who thus came too late. The horrour of it being once only Represented by some profane people, who acted the *Foolish Virgins* in a Play, at a City in *Germany*, it even kill'd a Prince that was a Spectator of it. Tis impossible to utter the Confusion which the slipping of *time* does put the souls of men into. When *Esau* had missed his Time to procure a Blessing for himself, how did he resent it? We are told in Gen. 27. 34. *He cry'd with a great and exceeding bitter Cry.* Alas, how should it be otherwise? The slipping of *Time* is an *Ill, and an* exceeding bitter *thing.* There are but two sorts of men; both of them find the *Loss of time*, to prove at some time or other, a sad, an evil, a troublesome thing unto them, 'Tis thus especially when their time is come to *Dy*, when their time is to *be no more.* As for *Good men*, the *Loss of time* usually strowes *Thorns* on their *Beds* when they come to dy. It grieves the best man to think, My Time, *my* Time, *I have not so laid it out for God as I should have done.* He was a painfull & a pious Minister of the Gos-

pel, who yet breathed out this among his last Groans, *O the Loss* of Time! *it sits heavy on my spirit now.* As for *Bad men*, the *Loss of Time* flashes Hell fire into their spirits when they come to Dy. It causes terrible wounds and pains in the departing soul of a Sinner to think *I had once a* Time *to Believe, a* Time *to Repent, a* Time *to lay up for Eternity, but now my* Time is gone *for ever.* The shriek of a poor man going out of the world sometimes has been, *A world of Wealth for an inch of Time.* Certainly, tis *Wisdom* to prevent such things as these.

The *Use* of these things remains.

USE.

Let us all be hence advised to *Discern* and *Improve Time*, which we have to discharge our *Duties* in. The most of us, tis to be hoped, may discern *Judgment*; we know *What* our Duty *is*, and *How* it is to be dispatched. But let us also *discern Time*: Suffer we not our *time* to run from us, while we neglect the *great Ends* which we have it for. O let not the Lord have cause to complain of us as in Jer. 8. 7. *The Birds in the Heaven know their appointed* times, *but my people do not know.*

That we may *Discern time*, and *improve time*, such Directions as these may well be followed.

Direction I.

Let us *Discern* our Time. and not *Mis-spend* our Time. Avoid those *Time*-wasting things, which

which would serve us about our *Time*, as the High-way men did the poor Traveller in Luc. 10. 30. in his way to *Jericho*. We are all Travelling in the the way to Eternity; there are these and those Robbers in the way that would plunder us of our time: shun them, fly them. Count *Mis-spence* of Time one of the most wicked and woful follies in the world.

Let us *discern* three things in *all* Time, and permit *no* Time to be devoured by two things which we may be under Temptation to.

The things which we are to discern in *all* Time are these,

First, let us *discern* the *Worth* of *all* Time. Let not an hour pass without this opinion of it, *This hour is too good to be lost.* If we *prize* the Jewel we shall not *lose* it. It is for our shame that even an Heathen made that complaint, *Quem mihi dabis qui diem æstimet?* Where will you find a man that esteems his *Time* as he ought to do? Ponder well what a vast *price* our Lord paid for our Time. We had forfeited all our Time into the hands of infinite revenging Justice; the just wrath of God would have taken away *Time* and *Life* from us long ago, if our Lord Jesus had not laid down such a *price* as that in 1. Pet. 1. 18. *Ye were redeemed, not with silver and gold, but with the* precious bloud *of Jesus Christ*. O don't throw away any of that which cost so dear.

And ponder well what a vast price the *dying* of

the *damned* set on their Time. We may say of it as *Job* of another thing, in Cap. 28. 22. *Destruction and death, say, we have heard the fame thereof with our ears.* Even so, *Destruction and Death set an high rate upon it.* Ask men when *Destruction* and *Death* is neat to seizing upon 'em, *How much would you give now for a little of the time that is gone?* They will reply, *O, whole mountains of gold for one hour of it!* Judge now as you will judge then.

Secondly, Let us *Discern* the *Irrevokableness* of our *Time.* When our time is once gone, it remains *Irrevokable*, and *Irrecoverable* for evermore. We may say of every *Time* that is *past*, as in Psal. 49. 8. *It is precious and it ceaseth forever.* The Wish of *Hezekiah* could once bring back the shadow of the *Sun*, but never could any man procure a Return of his *Time.* Sometimes the doleful Cryes of distressed ones have been, *Call* Time *again!* *call* Time *again!* But alas, *Time* won't come back for *Calling.* Oh how should this make us to takeheed that we don't abuse any part of our Time, *I shall never have* this *time again!* When once our Time has *taken wing*, what is said of *Love*, in Cant. 8. 7. that may be said of *Time*, *If a man would give all the substance of his house for it, it would utterly be contemned.* When once Time is gone, *'tis gone.*

Thirdly, let us *Discern* our *Accountableness* for all our *Time.* God maintains us and supplies

us with *Time* continually. He keeps a *Sun* to measure it. The *time* will come when He will reckon with us about all our *Time*. 'Tis said in *Eccl.* 11. 9. *O young man walk in the wayes of thy heart; but know thou that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgement.* In like sort, let me say, *Come, squander away thy* Time, *even* contrive *to get the dead commodity off thy hands; but know thou that in the day, when God shall judge the world, all this* Time *of thine must be* accounted *for.* It was the Law of old, in *Exod* 21. 18. *If one man smite another, so that he keep his bed, and yet walk abroad again, he shall pay for his healing, and the* Loss *of his* Time: Truly so, if we impenitently *lose* any of the *Time* which God hath given us, He will make us *pay* for it, in the day of his pleading with us. 'Tis said in Matth. 12. 36. *Men shall give an account of every* idle word. Much more in that day shall men give an account of every *idle Hour*. The God that hath numbred our *Hairs*, hath also numbred our *Houres*. It will be a fearful thing, if at last He say unto us, *Thou wicked and slothful servant, thy* life *has been made up of* idle hours.

These things are we to *discern* in *all Time*. For the sake hereof, let us now permit *no Time* to be misplac'd in such things as these.

First, Let us *mispend no Time* in *vanity*, of them that live in *vain pleasures* 'tis said in 1 *Tim* 5. 6. *they are Dead while they live.* They *discern*

no Time, and *enjoy* none. Too much *Time* is not to be laid out in *Eating* and *Drinking*. To affect *Long Meals*, or to *tarry long at the Wine*, does not become a Christian. Thy Soul is a little too noble a thing sure to be made the *Cook* of thy *Body*. Moreover, Too much *Time* is not to be laid out in *Attiring* and *Adorning*. It made an holy man among the Ancients to weep, when in a morning he saw a person longer in *Dressing*, than himself had been in *praying*. Thy *Carcase* that is to feed the Worms ere long should not put by thy cares about thy *Spirit*, which must be in *Weal* or *Woe* for ever. Once more, Too much *Time* is not to be laid out in *Sporting* and *Gaming*. There are some *lawful Recreations*, of which we should be shy, lest they steal away our *Heart* and our *Time*. That blessed Martyr, *John Hus*, just before he dyed, in a Letter thus *bewaild* himself, *O beg of God to pardon me for the* Time *I have lost at such a Play*, that yet in it self was very innocent. But there are some *unlawful Recreations* also, in which multitudes play away their *Time*. The plays which depend upon a *pure Lot* are such. The moral Heathen zealously reproached them. And severe Statutes were made against them when the *Roman* Empire became a *Christian*. Men always *loose* at them, those things which are better than any that they *win*, their *Time*, if not their *Soul*.

Secondly, Let us *mispend* no *Time* in *Idleness*. It

It was an ill world where the Apostle could say, as in 2. Thes. 3. 11. *There are some that walk disorderly*, working not *at all*. Every man should be able to make a good Answer to the Question which *Pharaoh* put unto *Joseph*'s Brethren, *I pray, What is your* Occupation? A big part of our Time should be laid out on our *particular Callings*. A *Calling* is an Ordinance of God; *Adam* in Paradise had a *Labour* imposed on him. Be diligent in some one or other. No man so fully and foully falls into the possession of the Devil, as the *idle* man. The *Ants*, the *Bees*, and all the Creatures exclaime against him. *Idleness*, the hundred against in *Ezek.* 16. 49. as one of the Sins that brought *Hell* out of *Heaven* upon *Sodom* long ago; it will carry from *Earth* to *Hell* the souls of them that in it snore away their lives.

When men do'nt *misspend* their Time, then do they *discern it*.

Direction, II.

Let us *Discern* our *Time*, and Attend *every Duty* in the *proper Time*.

There is a two-fold *Prudence* which the *Wise man's heart* is to be no stranger to.

The First *Prudence* is,

Let no *Duty* be done out of its *Time*. We are told in Eccles. 3. 11. *God hath made every thing beautiful in the* Time *of it*. There is a *Nick of Time* that we are to take for all we do. Not *Snow* but *Fruit* is *beautiful* in the Summer. Tis not

not beautiful for the Duty of *Prayer*, to be done at a *ſleepy* time, or at a *buſy* time. Tis not *beautiful* for the Duty of *Reproof* to be done at a *time* when it can do no *good* at all. Set not upon this or that Duty at a time when God calls to *another* Duty. Tis ſaid in Eccleſ. 8. 6. *To every purpoſe there is a* Time *and Judgement.* We may render all our Duties like *Apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*, by well *timing* of them.

The Second *Prudence* is,

Let no *Time* paſs away without its *Duty*: Let none of our *times* be unaccompanied with the *Duties* which belong unto them. As now, there are *Duties* that belong to a time of *Proſperity*, and *Duties* which belong to a Time of *Adverſity*. Tis ſaid in *Eccleſ.* 7. 14. *In the day of* Proſperity *be* joyful, *but in the day of* Adverſity Conſider. In a time of *Proſperity*: now is a time for men to *Remember* their *Creator before the* evil *days come*; Now is a *time* for men to *ſet their heart and their ſoul to* ſeek the Lord *who hath given them reſt on every ſide.* In a time of *Adverſity*, now is a *time* for men to bring *ſin to remembrance*; now is a time for men to *meet the Lord* in all the ways of Repentance and Obedience. This is to *Diſcern the* Time. But there are eſpecially three ſorts of times which we are to fill with the *Duties* of thoſe *Times*.

Firſt. Let the Dutyes of *Worſhipping times*, be done in thoſe times. We have our *times* every

day

day wherein the Lord saith, *seek my Face*. Now let the *Echo* of our souls be that in Psal. 27. 8. *Thy Face, Lord, we will seek*. We have every day our *times* for private Prayer, our *times* for secret Prayer, our times for Reading *of*, and Thinking *on* the Word of God. Let those things be faithfully done in those Times.

Especially, *Remember the Sabbath Day*. Let *Sabbath*-time be *sanctifyed* time. On this day, ly all the day long at the *pool* of Mercy; *Mercy, Mercy*, and Salvation for an immortal soul is this day to be traded for. 'Tis a *Time* that the great God is very Jealous about. He does wonderfully curse the *Souls*, and blast the *Houses*, and ruin the *Countryes* where this Holy *Time* is not acknowledged. He will terribly break the *rest* of those whom His *Rest* shall not be regarded by.

Secondly, Let the Dutyes of *Visiting* Times be done in those *Times*. 'Tis too commonly seen that *Amici temporis Fures*; our *Friends* are our *Theeves*; they *Steal* our *time*, because we don't *use* our time, when then they are with us. 'Tis observable, in *Col.* 4. 6. as soon as the Apostle had said, *Redeem the time*, he adds, *Let your speech be always with Grace*. That, that indeed is a rare way to *Redeem* the *time*. Let us ordinarily study to do some good, whatever Company we come into. It was observed of that excellent *Ursin* by his renowned Friend, *I never was*

in his company, but I went away (Doctior aut Melior) *the* wiser *or the* better *from him.* Abhor, O abhor the uſeleſs viſits that are quite contrary to all ſuch deſigns. Mourn if you have been in any Company without being profitable thereunto.

Thirdly, Let the Duties of *Intervening* times be done in thoſe *times*. We have large *Fragments* of time, that are the Intervals of our buſineſſes; about theſe Fragments of *time*, I would ſay as our *Lord* ſaid about the Fragments of *Bread*, in Joh. 6. 12. *Gather up thoſe* Fragments *that nothing be loſt.* How many thouſands of happy thoughts might we have as we are ſitting in the *Houſe*, or walking in the *Street*, otherwiſe wholly unimployed? The very Filings of *Gold* and of *Time* are not to be caſt away. To *diſcern* our time, is to *adapt* our time.

Direction. III.

Let us *diſcern* our *Time*, and make none but *Good Bargains* about the time. The Scripture once and again tells us, as in *Eph.* 5. 16. that we are to *Buy up* the time, or *buy out* the time. This is to *diſcern* the *Time!* We muſt be at ſome *Coſt*, and at ſome *Charge* for it, if we would not be ill-husbands of our time: We muſt pay down either *Mony* or *Monyes-worth* for it; we muſt *forego* and *undergo* many things for it. Many things muſt we *give up*, that our time ſo may be well imployed. The caſe is ordinarily

so, that either we must resign many *Pleasures*, many *Profits*, many *Honours*, or else we must part with our *time*. Now rather *give up* all Delights, than suffer precious time to be pyrated away. All the things *of* time, are sometimes Expence little enough *for* time. Yea, many things must we give *back*, that so we may not misemploy our time. The *Devil* and our *Lusts* have been trucking for our *time*. The Devil, that hellish Huckster, would engross all our *Time* for his own. He deals with us as the *Europeans* dealt at first with the silly *Indians*, who lett go their *Gold*, and *Silver*, and *Diamonds* for *glass-Beads* and *tinsil-Toyes*. The Answer that our *Lust* makes to the Tempter is, *Let me have* the pleasures of sin for a season, *and every season of my* time *shall be thine*. O but we should be content to *give back* all that Satan has proffer'd us for our time; let it be never-so-much that we might have had for the *misuse of time*, begrutch it not. 'Twas the Speech of *Austin*, *Perde aliquid ut Deo vaces* If you would have Time for *God*, or any Good, you must part with something for it.

In a Word, Let us labour now to *Regain* the *Time* that we have been cheated of. The cheef way to do that, is, *By a* double *Diligence for the time to come*. *Make up* the *time* we have made an ill market of, by an extraordinary *Industry* and *Activity* in the *time* yet *before* us.

The

The *Israelites* in their Journey to *Canaan* made more way the last year or two, than they had done in almost forty years before. All the many Sermons in the Book of *Deuteronomy* seem preached by *Moses* in the last month or two before he dy'd. O sit down and think well, *How shall I lay out my* time *for the best Advantage?* Let that be said of us when we dye, *Diu vixit, licet non diu fuit.* He lived *long* in a *little time.*

To *Purchase* our time, is to *discern* our time.

Direction. IV.

Let us *Discern* our time, and let us *Improve* the *Present time*, to make our peace with the Eternal God.

Alas, All the sinful and woful time of our *Unregeneracy* is *Lost time.* One that was converted but about seven years before he dyed, ordered that Epitaph to be inscribed on his Grave, *Here lyes an Aged man who dy'd but seven years old.* Thou dost not *live* till thou dost *repent*, till thou dost *beleeve.*

Be sure, there is no Duty so much incumbent on us, as that of *Turning from* Sin *to* God *in Christ.* Well, the great God hath stated the *present* time for the doing of it. Tis the Warning, the solemn warning of the Holy God unto us, 2. Cor. 6. 2. *Behold*, Now *is the* Accepted *time*, Now *is the Day of Salvation.* Let those that are not yet born-again, *discern* this their *time.* O yee souls in peril, What is it that ye resolve upon?

Your

Your time is *to Day, to Day, if you will hear the voice of God.* Let me say about this *Time*, as *Boaz* about that *Land* in *Ruth*, 4. 4. *If you will redeem it, redeem it.* O Delay not; Dally not, Trifle not about this grand Concern; Do not say as the unhappy *Felix* did, *I'le mind it at a more convenient season.* No, No, *Discern* it, that the most *convenient season* is just NOW. O that all unconverted men would consider the Danger the Madness of their *Procrastinations.* 'Tis said in Eccles. 9. 12. *Man knoweth not his time.* Man, *discern* thy *time* as a flying time, and an uncertain time. A Jewish *Rabbi* gave that Counsel to a Scholar of his, *Besure you repent at least a* day *before you dy.* Truly, tis a fearful thing for a man when he comes to dye, not to be able to say, *'Tis at least a* day *since that I made my peace with God.* Well, who of us can say, that *this day* is not our *last day*? We cannot be sure that we *repent a day before we dy*, unless we *repent* this *very day.* Suppose you were to suffer an horrible *Death* in case you had not finished some notable Undertaking before night. O how would every stroke of the Clock strike to your very hearts within you! Behold O Sinner, be amazed, stand Astonished, and take the *present time* to get out of thy *present state.* Tis possible thou mayst be a *dead man* before to morrow, tis possible *this night thy soul may be required.* Horrid will thy condition be, if this happen before thy

thy peace be made with GOD. There are Graves in the *Burying-Place* shorter than the youngest of us all. Thou mayst Conclude with saying as *David* to *Jonathan*, *As the Lord lives, there is but a* step *between me and death.* Wherefore, let *me* Conclude with saying as *Michal* to David, *O save thy self to night, for to morrow thou mayst be slain.* Let no man *Repent too late*, but let every man *Discern the time.* Tis the sigh of our GOD over us, *O that they understood! that they would* Consider *their Latter*

END!

The TRYED *CHRISTIAN.*

A Diſcourſe delivered, upon *Recovery* from

SICKNESS

JOB. XXIII. 10.

When He hath Tryed *me, I ſhall come forth as* GOLD.

THere was a *Man in the Land of* Arabia, *whoſe name was* Job; *and that man was perfect and upright.* The Church of GOD is enriched with an excellent *Hiſtory*, in an elegant *Poeſie*, relating the great *Proſperity*, the ſad *Adverſity*, and ſtrange *Recovery* of that *perfect and upright man*. Tis probable, that he was an *Edomite*, and the very *Jobab* whom *Eſau* was Great-Grandfather unto; but this I am

am sure of, *He was an Israelite indeed!* From a Rich and Fair estate, He suddenly became, *As poor as Job*; and while he was in this *poor* Condition, his noble Friends gave him their friendly *Visits* and *Respects*. Many admirable *Dialogues* now passed between them; wherein *they* endeavoured to Accuse and Convince him of some remarkable Iniquity, as the Cause of his Calamity; and *he* laboured to vindicate himself; to assert his own Integrity and Sincerity.

In our Context here, the good man is expressing his *Willingness* and *Readiness* to appear before the Judgement-seat of God; and in our Text, he declares what he expects would be the Result of his *Tryals* by the Lord. He comforts himself by those two Considerations. First, that God's *Knowledge* did reach him. He saith, *God knowes the way that is in me*; q. d. Tho I cannot see *God*, yet God can see *me*; and the most inward *Purposes* or *Appetites* of my mind, are not concealed from Him. And *Next*, that God's *Tryal* would clear him. *Thus* is the Article that lyes before us to be Explained and Improved; and the *Doctrine*, which may guide our Discourse upon it, is,

That *Good men come forth as* GOLD, *under and after the* Trials *of the Almighty God.*

It is by the ensuing *Propositions* that we may arrive to right thoughts about the Truth before us.

Proposition

Proposition. I.

There is a various *Tryal* which the God of Heaven causes to pass upon His people. No Christian can be without his *Tryals*. But there are especialy two sorts of *Tryals* which our God will subject us all unto. First,

There are the Trials of Divine *Examinations*. Which will be critical upon us. Tis said in Psal. 11. 4, 5. *The Lords eyes behold, and His eye-lids* try *the children of men*; *the Lord* sounds (as the French Translation hath it) *both the righteous and the wicked*. Every man in the world falls under the *Notice*, and so, under the *Tryal* of the omniscient God. The all-seeing *Eyes* of God, as it were, *Examine* us, and His *Ey-lids* knit themselves for a Scrutiny into our Hearts and lives. The blessed God will pass a *Judgment*, after a *Trial* upon us; whether we *truly love Him and seek Him*, or no. We are told in Psal. 7. 9. *The righteous God* trieth *the Hearts and the Reins*; an Assertion, an Expression, it may be, more than seven times repeted in the Word of God! The *Examination* and *Observation* of God, extends it self to the most interior parts of men; the motions of their very *Hearts* and *Reins* come under His exactest Cognizance. Every man may so far say after that godly man, in Psal. 17. 3. Lord, *thou hast proved my heart, thou hast visited me, thou hast* tried *me*. To use a

Similitude

Similitude made Legitimate and Canonical by the Apostle himself, in Heb. 4. 13. The *Sacrificeing Knife* of old, never did penetrate so far into the Bowels of the Creatures it was imployed upon; it never laid them so *naked* and *open*, before the standers-by; as the *examining Eye* of God makes a discovery of what is in our Souls and our wayes.

Secondly, There are the Trials of Divine *Dispensations* which we must have Experience of. God's *Providences* are our *Probations*; by them we are *tried* what we are. The things which befal us in the world, fetch out of us, those things which manifest what *metal* we are made of. Particularly, tis said in 2. Cor. 6. 3, 7. We are *Approved by* things on the *Right hand* and on the *Left*.

First, The *Merciful* Dispensations of God, are *Trials* of us: these are Trials on the *Right* hand. It is a sacred Proverb, in *Prov.* 27. 21. *As the Fining-pot for silver, and the Furnace for* Gold, *so is a man to his praise*; or *so the mouth which praises any one, is to try him.* As when a man is *praised* by his Neighbour, so when a man is *Blessed* of his Maker, he is then *tried* unto the utmost. *Honours* from below, do *Indicare virum*; they soon *Try* & *show* the man that is persum'd therewith; and the same is done by *Mercies* from above. Therein the Lord brings us, as He did the Souldiers of *Gideon*, to a *River* of Plenty, and He saies,

as in *Judg.* 7. 4. *Now I will* try *them there.* The Favours of God, as it were, put us into a *Crucible*, in a *Furnace*, where it soon becomes apparent, whether we fear him or no. They are so many Trials, *Whether we will hear God speaking to us in our prosperity*; or *whether when we wax fat, we shall kick against the Lord.*

Secondly, The *Afflictive* Dispensations of God, are likewise *Tryals* of us. And these are Trials on the *Left hand.* So much is intimated in 1. Pet. 1. 6, 7. *Ye are in heaviness thro' many* Temptations, *that the* trial *of your faith, being much more precious than that of gold which perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise.* All *Afflictions* are *Tentations*; by them we are *tried* whether we have the Grace of God in us or no. Tis *Faith*, but not Faith *alone*, which our *Troubles* here are the *Trials* of. A *Sick-bed* is a *Furnace*, a *Reproach* is a *Furnace*, a *Loss*, or a *Goal* is a *Furnace*, in which tis *tried* whether we have the spirits, not of *Bastards*, but of *Children* in us. Hence we read of *A great* Tryal *of* Affliction. *Afflicted* persons may make that Confession in Ps. 66. 10, 11, *Thou, O God, hast* proved *us, thou hast* tried *us as silver is* tried; *thou hast laid* Affliction *upon our loins.* Hereby we are Try'd *whether we will despise the Chastning of the Lord*, or *whether we will faint when rebuked of Him.*

Proposition II.

Upon the *Trials* of God, good men *come forth as gold.*

There is that in *Gold*, which good men may be compar'd unto. We read in Deut. 1. 1. about the mountains of *Dizahab*: that is, the *Golden* mountains; because *Gold* was probably dug from thence. The *Churches* of God in the world, are such *Mountains* of gold. Every true Believer is a rich lump of *Gold* before the Lord. Of such persons tis said in Lam. 4. 2. *They are the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine* gold. There are diverse properties in *Gold*, which a good man will have a blessed Resemblance of. I should offer you not *Gold*, but *Hay* and *stubble* if I should read you here a *Lecture* of *Metallogy*, or discourse to you all that I could Philosophize about this King of *Metals*. Let me only touch on a few common Reflections, As now,

Gold is a *pure* metal. Hence we read near some scores of times in the sacred Scripture, about *pure Gold*. It will not readily admit a Mixture or an Alloy with more imperfect Metals; unless with *Silver*: Especially the *Dust-gold* of *Guinea*, Gold whereof *Job* saith, tis *Dust of gold*: wonderful is the *Purity* thereof! Thus a good man is a *pure* man; He is one of those that are called in *Matth.* 5. 8. *The pure in heart*: He is *pure* in his *Ends*, *pure* in his principles, *pure* in his practises, *pure* from the dross of *Lust*: and he is not so much *Nominally* as really, *A Puritan.*

Again

Again, Gold is a *Ductil* Metal. Tis marvellously extensible when beaten into Leaves; 'twere incredible to tell how far one Grain of *Gold* may be extended and continued. So dense and compacted, and united, are the parts of it, that an Ounce of it may be beaten (I suppose) into a Thousand Leaves. Thus a good Man can be *Drawn forth* into large Expressions of goodness and vertue. It was said by such an one in Psal. 11. 3. *My goodness Extendeth.* He *extends* his Piety, his Charity, he *extends* his Influence far and near; and he is a *Diffusive* good.

Once more, *Gold* is a *Beautiful* metal. 'Tis called, *Aurum*, for that very cause; *ab Aura*, i. e. *a Splendore.* Tis a shining and glitt'ring thing; and hence things that are very splendid, are said to be *covered with Yellow* Gold. For this reason, an *Hook* of it once catch't *Achan* by *the Lust of the Eye.* Thus, a good man has a transcendent *Beauty* in him. To such an one, 'twas said in Cant. 6. 4. *Thou art* Beautiful. There is a Lustre on the *Face*, and a Lustre in the *Walk* of such a man; he has even the Splendor of *A light in the world.*

Furthermore, *Gold* is a *Durable* Metal. Tho' the Bible affirms that it is *Corruptible*, and *Conkerable*, and *Perishing*, yet there is a mighty *Strength* to be ascribed unto it. It will endure the hottest *Fire* with small or no Diminution: and *Aqua-fortis* it self will not eat into it. Such

an *Enduring* thing is a good man. His Character is that in Matth. 24. 13. *He shall* endure *to the end.* No *Fire*, no *Water*, no Vexation shall consume his Devotion. He is the *Overcomer*, whom neither the Flattery nor the Fury, neither the Frowning nor the Fawning of any *Tempter* can dissolve the Religion of.

Moreover, *Gold* is a *Ponderous* Metal. Even *Lead* it self in its weight, is to *Gold* as far short as *Sixty* is of an *Hundred*; if I mistake it not. Such is the *Quality*, such the *Gravity* of a good man. A godly man is a *Weighty* man. Tis said in Prov. 12. 26. *A righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour.* One such man will weigh down multitudes and myriads of other men. His being a *pondering man*, it soon makes him become *ponderous* man. His unconverted Neighbourhood may own of him, *Thou art worth ten thousand of us.*

Finally *Gold* is a *precious* Metal. Its *precious* for the *Use* which tis of in *Nature.* Rich Cordials and Medicines are to be extracted from it. Its precious also for the *Price* which tis of in *Esteem*; the *Auri sacra fames*, the unhallowed Appetite which men crave it with, prefers it above all common things. Tis in Scripture-phrase a *precious* thing indeed, of which it might be said, *It is more precious than gold.* But of a good man might such a thing be spoken: it may be said of such a man, as in *Isa.* 13. 12. The man is

more

more precious than fine gold; *even than the golden wedge of* Ophir; [i. e. *Peru*, as some with much pretense of Reason do conjecture it.] A *gracious* man, is a *precious* man; all Beholders ought to put a value upon him; he is even, *precious in the eyes of the Lord.*

Thus like to *Gold* will good men come forth, under and after the *Tryals* of the Lord; which comprehends these two Conclusions in it.

Conclusion. I.

A good man is *found* good by the *Examinations* of God. When God comes to *try* a good man, He finds the heart of the man to be *right* before Him. The good man may say with him in 1. *Chron.* 29. 17. *O my God, I know that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness; as for mee, in the uprightness of my heart have I offered.* Indeed our God uses not an Extremity of Justice and Rigour in our *Trial*; He would find a world of Iniquity in us, if He did; and He would utterly consume us. The Lord said in Isa. 48. 10. *Behold, I have refined thee, but not like silver.* No, the Refiner of gold or silver will not allow the the least measure of *Dross* therein. But our merciful. G d overlooks many grains of Corruption many grains of *Defilement* & of *Debasement* in us; for we all have our *Grains*. However upon the *Trial* of a good man, the good God pronounces this of him, *This is a dear Son and a pleasant child, I will surely have mercy on him*; He pronounces

nounces this, *I find good metal in the soul of that man, and he shall be mine in the day when I make up my Jewels.* The Devil, the Satan, who is the *Accuser of the* Brethren, *he* may load a good man with Calumnies not a few; that *evil spirit* will accuse a good man as guilty of *Hypocrisie* in the power of it; but the Holy God brings it unto a *Tryal*, and then He pronounces as in *Job.* 2. 3. I have *tried* him; *and he is my servant, a perfect and an upright man; One that feareth God and eschewеth evil; and still he holdeth fast his integrity.*

Conclusion. II.

A good man is *made* better by the *Dispensations* of God. It is to him that there is granted the Fulfilment of that promise in *Rom.* 8. 28. *All things shall work together for good.* As for the *merciful* Dispensations of God, these do *encline* as well as *oblige* a good man to all manner of Obedience; they cause him to think, *What shall I render to the Lord?* they cause him to say, *I will fear the Lord and His goodness, I will never sin against so good a God as He.* Thus we are told in Rom. 2. 4. *The goodness of God leadeth to repentance.* It even melts and breaks the heart of a good man, so that he cannot find in his heart *after such deliverances again to break his commandments.* As for the *Afflictive* Dispensations of God, these also cause a good man more than ever to *Abound in the works of the Lord*; they put him upon more *Thinking on his waies*, and upon

turn-

turning his feet more unto the testmonies of God. It was said in Psal. 119. 71. *It is good for me that I have been* afflicted; *that I might learn thy statutes.* A good man gets this *good* thereby; his *Wisdom* and his *Vertue* is thereby augmented; and he *Learns Obedience by the things which he suffers.*

USE.

There is a two-fold Exhortation which I must now bespeak your earnest Heed unto.

I. Let us approve our selves as *Gold* under the *Examinations* of the Blessed God. There are who take notice that the Original in Job. 37 22. is, *Gold cometh out of the* North. God grant that the best *Gold* may here be found in our *North*! that you the inhabitants of the *North* may for your Vertues be as *Gold* before the Lord. Yea, that *North-Boston* may be like *Havilah*, and it may be said, *The gold of that land is good*; or, there are Extraordinary *golden* and precious Christians there.

Tis a Three-fold Counsel which you may therefore be advised with.

Counsil. I.

Beleeve, and *Expect* the Trials of the eternal God.

Beleeve that God now does *Understand* what you are. It was an Article in that famous Prophets *Creed*, in Jer. 12. 3. *Thou, O Lord knowest me, thou hast seen me, and* tryed *my* heart *towards*

thee. O that every one of us were enough sensible of that awful solemn Truth! Tis a common thing to say, *God knowes my heart*; but who does enough lay that thing *to heart*? Who reckons any more upon it than the false *Gehazi* did? It was an Orthodox perswasion in Psal. 139. 1, 2. *O Lord thou hast searched me and known me; thou understandest my thought afar off.* Tis very certain, that every one of our thoughts are known to the infinite God, even *afar off*, long enough before they come into our minds. But, *O Lord, who has believed our Report?* Men and Brethren, do you *beleeve* it, and apprehend it, and realize it. *Beleeve* it, that God is *all Eye*, and that He needs not a *Glass Window* in your breasts for the Exploration of you. *Beleeve* it, that *the eyes of the Lord run to & fro, through the whole earth*; and that he will not by a *Mistake* drop a Blessing wrong as blind *Isaac* did of old. Yea, let it be a frequent Meditation with you, *All that I am, and all that I think, is well known unto the Lord.*

And *Expect* that God will one day *Discover* what you are. There is a *Day of Discovery* that shall shine upon us all; and, *Behold the Day comes that shall burn as an Oven, and all that do wickedly shall be stubble in it.*

Expect that the great God will have a *Snare* in this world, for your Detection. Ever now & then there happen some *Discriminating* Things, *That they which are approved might be made manifest.*

God

God will have His Times and His Wayes, possibly to *uncase* our hearts before all our Neighbours. It was said of that blessed man in 2. *Chron.* 32. 31. *God left him* (in one thing) *to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart.* You may look for some *Temptation* before you dye, which will make the Inclinations of your souls notorious to the world; especially, If your *Hearts* be not *right with God.* It is a *Simile* us'd by one of the Ancients, for it; You shall have an *Ape* dress't in the *Attire* of a Man, for a while imitating the *Look*, and *shape*, and *Gesture* of a man: but if a *Nutt*, or an *Apple* be thrown before him, he soon showes what he is. Thou *Hypocrite*, the Lord will have something to *throw before* thee, which *Object* will decoy thee into a natural suitable Expression of thy self; and as our Lord speaks, in Rev. 2. 23. *All the Churches shall know, that I am He that searcheth the Heart.*

Expect also, that the great God will have a *Bar* for your Detection in another world. 'Tis confessed by all Christians, as in 2. Cor. 5. 10. *We must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ.* O that we could every one of us now seriously place our selves before *the Judgment seat of God!* Remember, O immortal souls, that you must all very shortly appear before a *Judge* who hath *Eyes like a flame of fire*; and you must then be exposed in the full view of *Heaven & Earth*,

Remem-

Remember that you shall then have no *Vizard*, no *Disguise* to cover you, but all men and Angels must hear truly *what* you are. It was the warning in *Eccl.* 11. 9. *--- know thou, that God will bring thee to Judgment.* Even so *Know thou*, that thou canst not avoid the day when *God shall bring every worke into Judgement, with every secret thing. Know thou*, that when the dead, *small and great stand before God*, then *thou* shalt stand among 'em! *Know thou*, that tho' thou shouldst then shriek, *O Rocks, hide me*, or *O Mountains- defend me*, the the Rocks and the Mountains would be deaf unto that lamentable cry. Holy *Jerom* could say, *Wherever I* am, *or whatever I* do, *Methinks I hear the Alarums of the last Trumpet*, Arise ye dead & come to *Judgement*. O that you would often Reflect upon the Day, when *God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.*

Counsil. 2.

Cry mightily to God, that He would give you the *Gold* which will endure all *Tryals* whatsoever. // Our Lord saith unto us in Rev. 3. 18. *I counsil thee to buy of me* Gold tried *in the fire*. That *Gold* is *Grace*; // let us *buy* that is, let us beg it of Him. Let us make that our fervent & our frequent *Prayer*, in Psal. 119. 80. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I may not be ashamed!* Be careful and *prayerful*, that you may be *New Creatures* and have *the Root of the matter* in your souls: Be careful and *prayerful*, That you

may

may have *Oyl in your vessels*: Be careful and *prayerful*, That you may have in you, *the well of water which springs up into everlasting life.* Let your prayers be restless, till you find that you are indeed *Born again*, indeed *Converted*, indeed *Sanctified.* As for the *Grace* of God, *my son, seek it as silver*; for indeed, the *Gain of it is better than fine gold.*

Counsel, 3.

Often bring your selves to the *Tryals* of a *Self-Examination.* Tis the Charge of God, in 2. Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your selves whether you be in the Faith; prove your own selves.* Your souls are as *Vessels*, then *Pierce* them to see what they *have.* Your souls are as *Metals*, then *Touch* them to see what they *are.* *Such* are the Allusions of the *Holy Spirit* there. *Know thy self*, was a *golden Rule* of Old, and it will make a golden *Saint* when we make much use of that Rule, *Try thy self.* We are to use the Word of God as a *Glass* in which we are to behold our selves; and we are often to compare our selves with what is therein required of us. When we are in a *Meditation*, as we should every day be upon some *Truths* of God, we should then *examine* our selves, *Whether we are moulded according thereunto.* And when we are under a *Visitation*, as we sometimes are, by the *Rods* of God, we should then *Examine* our selves, as they that of Old said, *Let us now search and* try *our wayes.* Especially when we are approching to the *Table*

of

of the Lord, *Self-Examination* is not then to be omitted. So hath the Apostle urged, in 1. Cor. 11. 28. *Let a man* examine himself, *and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.* Tis a fearful Impiety and Presumption, for a man to sit down at the *Holy Supper* without enquiring, *Have I a Wedding garment on, or no?* Yea tis convenient for a man *every Evening*, before he sleeps to *examine* himself and ask, *If I dy this night, is my immortal spirit safe?* O tremble exceedingly least your doom should be that in Jer. 2. 37. *The Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.* Therefore be much in *Examining* your selves.

Examine Whether you have true REPENTANCE.

Wherefore *Try* whether you are at so much pains for no *Outward* and *Earthly* thing, as you are for the mortification of every lust.

And Try whether *Afflictions* themselves are welcome to you, when you see your sins thereby embittered and subdued.

Examine Whether you have true FAITH.

Wherefore Try whether your Souls are extremely affected with the blessed *Fulness* & *Glory* which is in the Lord Jesus Christ. And Try whether your hearts most affectionately close with the *Gospel-way of Salvation by* Jesus Christ, so as cheerfully to venture the Lives of your souls upon it.

Exa-

Examine, Whether you have true LOVE! Wherefore Try, whether any thing that has a *Tendency* to promote the *Honour* of God, be readily embraced by you, as a thing more desirable than all the Riches in the world.

And Try whether you count no Service too much to be done for the *People of the Saints of the Most High*. Put the Question to your selves, and let the Preface of your Answer be that Request in Psal 139. 23. *Search me O God, and* try *me, and help me to* know my self.

To be much in such Self-Examination is the way to be a *Golden Christian*, and indeed, none but *such* an one will have a Value for the Exercise.

II. Let us also approve ourselves, as *gold*, under the *Dispensations* of the Blessed GOD.

Particularly,

First. Let them that are in *Prosperity* behave themselves well under the *Tryals* of the Lord. It may be that you are come to have store of *Gold*; O that you may *Be* like what you *Have!* Tis possible that you have been in much Distress and Sorrow: But God has brought you forth, as tis said He brought *Israel* out of *Egypt*, in Ps. 105. 37. *He brought them forth with* Gold.

Consider, That God is now *Trying* of your *Faithfulness*. No doubt, you have sometimes promised the God of Heaven, *That* if you might have such a measure of *Health* and *Strength*, or,

That

That if you might have such a Degree of *Estate* and *Honour* you would glorify God with a wonderful Activity. Well, saith our God, *I'll try.* God is *trying* whether you will be true to those Professions and Engagements, which you made before He so smil'd upon you. God is *trying* whether you will not Confirm that Observation, in Jer. 17. 9. *The* Heart *is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.*

Consider moreover, That God is now *trying* of your *Thankfulness.* A very terrible Wrath is denounced against them in Deut. 28. 47. *Who serve not God for the abundance of all things.* God gives you an *Abundance of all things*, and it is to *try* whether you will *serve* Him, and *praise* Him for it. God is *Trying* whether you will now often say, *Bless the* LORD, *O my soul, and all that is within me!* God is *Trying* whether you will now think, *What shall I render to the* LORD *for all His benefits?* Let us be as *Gold* by affording now a good Experiment.

Secondly, Let them that are in *Adversity* likewise behave themselves as under the *Tryals* of the Lord. We may most or all of us, Lament, *I am the man that hath seen Affliction*; there is a Variety of Calamity which we are *try'd* withal. God forbid that we should procure to our selves the Brand set upon that wicked man of old, *In the time of his* Distress *did he* trespass *yet* more *against the* LORD. Never was there in this

world

World a more doleful ſight than that of a *Theef* on a *Croſs*, yet Neglecting and Affronting the Son of God. We that have been lately under Affliction, (particularly, under that Affliction of *Sickneſs*) have as it were *lain among the pots*; God has as it were laid us by among the meaneſt Lumps of clay; but O that we may now come forth *Doves*, having *Wings covered with Silver*, and *Feathers with yellow Gold!* O that we may come forth of our *Tryals* more gracious, more Savoury, more Heavenly, than ever we were in our lives before; that the *Iron-Age* of *Grief* may iſſue in a *Golden-Age* of *Grace*, unto us; that our Adverſity may procure more *grace* to to us, than ever the Proſperity of *Solomon* did *gold* to him. Tis to be deſired, that the *Tranſmutation of Metals* may be Exemplified in us; and that the moſt exquiſite *Vitriolic* powder may not be ſo powerful, to make *Natural gold*, as the Duſt of Affliction may be to make *Spiritual gold* of our ſouls. Look to it, Leſt our Character be that, *Reprobate Silver, which is* rejected *by the* Lord.

The Firſt DESIRE.

Let us come forth more out-of-Love with Gold *which periſheth*. Our GOD hath taught us that no *gold* will deliver from Death and Hell; and that no *gold* can be carried away with

with, us at our Departure hence. Our God hath told us, That though we ſhould have never ſo much *gold* about us, we may in a moment be taken away from all. Wherefore Let us become Indifferent unto *gold*, and all the Delights of this miſerable World. Look, Look upon thy moſt *golden* Comforts, and imagine thou heareſt that Voice of GOD, in Prov. 23. 5. *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that which is not?* When one of the Martyrs had money proffer'd unto him, he Refuſed it, ſaying, *The Coyn is not* current *in the Countrey to which I am going.* O deſpiſe all *gold* but what will be Current there.

The Second Deſire.

Let us come forth more Admiring *of*, more Affected *with* ſuch things as are *better than gold*. The *Fear* of God is one of thoſe things, Whereof tis ſaid it Job, 28. 16. *It cannot be valued with the* Gold *of Ophir*. Let it be then our prime and cheef Study, to be daily acting of it; yea, Since we have lately ſeen *Time* loudly calling on us to *Redeem* it, Let a *Reſpect to God* now ennoble all the Actions of our Lives. The *Word* of God is another of thoſe things, Whereof tis ſaid, in Pſal. 19. 10. *It is more to be deſired than much fine* Gold. Let us then ſet an unſpeakable Value thereupon; Yea, ſince we have lately *ſeen an*

End

End of all Perfection elsewhere; Let the *Bible* of God be now more than ever the Companion of your Solitary Hours.

Finally, The *SON* of GOD, is the *Pearl of great price*, which no *Gold* is to be equaliz'd unto. We read of a *Brazen-Serpent* [or more truly a *Coper*-Serpent] marvellously useful to *Israel* of old, O let us now Esteem the Antitype of that *Brasen* or *Coper* Shadow, before the Richest *Gold*. The holy God has newly sent me back from the Sides of Eternity to tell you, *That* One *CHRIST is worth* ten *Worlds*. Tis a thing whereof you have been heretofore advised with frequent, solemn, lively *Warnings*, from the Eternal God: As *Joshua* could say, in *Cap.* 24. 27. *Behold, this stone shall be a Witness, for it hath heard all the words of the Lord.* So may *I* say, Let this *Pulpit*, and these *Walls* and *Seats* and *Pillars* Remember, if you have *forgotten*, That you have been often told, *All the gold in the world is not worth one Christ.* And behold, I repeat unto you one Warning more. Let this *House* be a *Witness*, and be you witnesses of it O ye *Angels* that are invisible here; That it has been earnestly affirmed in our Hearing, *A* Christ *is better than a* Thousand Worlds, *and they that sleight Him, will be* miserable *for infinitely more than* ten Thousand *Ages.*

LIFE DESIRED.

Upon the Death *of a* Relation.

Pſal. CXIX. 175.

Let my Soul live, *and it ſhall praiſe thee, and let thy Judgements help me.*

SWeeter Words than theſe could not come from the *Sweet Singer of Iſrael* himſelf. The Hundred and Nineteenth, is the *longeſt*, and yet, if the Compariſon be not *odious*, the *ſweeteſt*, of all the Pſalms; and perhaps the *Pſalm*, like the *Grace* wherewith it was Compoſed, has a *growing Sweetneſs*, towards the Concluſion of it. The one and twentieth *Octonary* in this excellent Pſalm, is a Bundle of *Heavenly Affections*; this two and twentieth Octonary is an Heap of *Holy Petitions*. There are eſpecially *Six* Petitions in this laſt part of the Pſalm. The *fourth* and *fifth* of them are in the words

words now before us. He begs, First, for his *Life*, then for God's *Help*. The *Life* petition'd for, may be understood as Two-fold: it is called, *The life of the Soul*; both *Natural* Life, and *Spiritual* Life may be intended in that Expression. But cheefly the former. *Let my soul live*; it is q. d. *Let my* Self *live*. Tis an usual Hebraism. In that signification it was the Choice of *Sampson*, Let *me dy*, in the Hebrew it is, *Let my* Soul *dy with the Philistines*. The *Help* petition'd for, has Two Things declared concerning it. We have the *For-What* of this *Help*; this is, That he might attend the Business for which he desired to live; namely, To *praise God*. And we also have the *From-Whence*, of this *Help*; this is, From the *Judgments* of God. *Thy Judgments*; this is one of the Ten various Phrases used here, to signify, the *Wayes* and *Means* whereby God reveals Himself unto the world.

In short, the *Doctrine* before us, is, That *While we pray to* live, *we should account the* Praises *of God to be the Cheef End of our* Life, *in which the* Judgments *of God are to be sought and used as our* Help.

The Propositions which may shape this Truth unto our minds are these.

Prop. I.

The Praise *of God is to be accounted the cheef end of our* Life *on Earth.* If our *Souls* do *live in our Bodies*, if we enjoy that *Life* which is an Union

between *Soul* and *Body*, this is to be the *End* of it; *That we may* praise *the God of our lives.* It was the pious Expectation of the Psalmist, in Psal. 118. 17. *I shal not dy but* live, *and* declare *the* works *of the Lord.* This is to be the Resolution of every man. Can we say, *I do not dy but live?* We should add, *I will then* declare *the* Praises *of the Lord.* The first Question that the Thoughts of men should be employed upon, is, *What is the Cheef End of Man?* The true and Just answer To that Question is, *The Cheef End of man is to* glorifie *God.* Well, put the Question so, *What is the Cheef End of* Life? The Answer to that Question too will be the same; *It is to* glorifie *God.*

To *praise* God, What is that? To *praise* God, is to *Render* and *Procure*, a due Acknowlement of His Excellencies. Indeed, all the Duties of *Religion* are Contained in this Comprehensive thing. When we *own*, when we *serve*, when we *Adore* the Great God in any or all the waies of His Worship, Then we *praise* Him; and we further *praise* Him, when we provoke others to join with us in doing so. This, This *Praise* of the LORD is the *End* of our *Life* in the World.

This is the *End* of our *Being.* We are told that *We have our* Being *in God.* Of all things whatever this is then most Reasonable, that *We should have our* Being *for* God; and our Being

Being *for* Him, is not expressed without our *praising* of Him. The blessed God looks from on high upon mankind, and saith, as in Isa. 43. 21. *This people have I formed for my self, they should shew forth my* Praise. Now that which is the *End* of our *Being*, is the *End* of our *Living* too. Two things are to be affirmed of it,

First, The *Law* of God doth *Appoint* this, as as the *End* of our Lives. Unto every man living, this is the Voice of God, *I spare thy* life, *that so thou mayst* live *my praise.* It is said in Rom. 14. 7. *If we live, we* are to *live unto the Lord.* What the Apostle saith of *Eating* and *Drinking*, may much more be said of *Living*; as in 1. Cor. 10. 30. It must *be unto the* Glory *of God.* God gives our Lives, God keeps our Lives, and this is His reveled, His Preceptive *Will* concerning our Lives; *Man, I suffer thy* life, *yea, I support thy* life, *that I may be praised, loved, admired by thee as long as thou livest.* It was an heavy dismal Charge against *Belshazzer*, in *Dan.* 5. 23. *God in whose Hand thy breath is, thou hast not glorified.* The Almighty God gives us notice of this, *Thy Breath is in my hand*; at the same time He also requires this of us, *Let thy* life *be to my praise.* That man makes a sacrilegious Incroachment and Invasion upon God's *Right*, who makes not God's *Praise*, the End of his living upon God's *Earth.*

There is therefore, *Secondly* this to be added thereunto.

The *Heart* of man should Embrace this as the *End* of our lives. It becomes every man to say, *I* live *that God who is worthy to be* praised, *may have the* praises *of my Obedience to Him.* It was the godly purpose of the Psalmist, in Psal. 147. 2. *While I* live *I will* praise *the Lord.* And a kin to this is the *Right thought*, which every man should entertain, *I do* live, *that I may* praise *the Lord.* Hence this is one of the principal *Pleas* which the Saints have used in their Supplications for their *Lives.* Good *Hezekiah* pray'd in his Distress, *Lord, let me* live. And what was his Argument? It was that in *Isa.* 38. 17, 18. *The* Grave *cannot* praise *thee*; *the* living, *the* living, *he shall* praise *thee.* The heart of man should readily close with such an *End* for the life of man. Satan saies, *Thou livest only to Enjoy the delights of the Flesh in the world; thou livest only to seek, to get, and to taste the secular pleasures provided for thee.* The soul of man should rise with unspeakable Indignation at this *wild* proposal. On the other side, our God saies, *The Business of thy* life *is to* magnifie *Mee, to make my* Praise *glorious.* Here now, Here the Soul of every man should fall in, and Reply, This *is all my* Salvation, *and all my* Desire.

But this leads to

Prop. II.

Prayers for life *are then, and only then rightly qualified*

qualified, when they have Respect unto the Praises of God.

To clear this matter, there are these things to be conceived.

One Conclusion is, That the *Living* on Earth have many *peculiar Opportunities* to be *Praising* of God. Indeed, *Blessed are the dead who dy in the Lord*, for they too are alwaies *praising* of Him. But yet they rest from some *Praises*, when they *rest from their Labours* here. The departed Saints are continually shouting, *Hallelujah, Hallelujah*, before the Throne of God. The Saints, they are *joyful in glory*; and the *High Praises* of God are perpetually Proceeding from those blessed Souls. But Christians in this world have their *peculiar Opportunities*, to be Glorifying of Him that made them. This did the *Psalmist* speak in Ps. 88. 11. *Shall the* dead *praise thee?* To instance in some particulars:

The *Living* here may be *praising* of God by the Discharge of many *Relations*, which the *dead* Saints are strangers unto. We may *now* praise God as *Parents*, as *Masters*, as *Officers* in the the Church or Common-Wealth. All those Capacities will *dy* with us, when we shall *go hence and be no more.*

Again, The *Living* here may be *Praising* of God, by Bearing many a *Witness* to the *Truths* and *Wayes* of the Lord Jesus Christ. We may now bestow many *Rebukes* upon the *Errors* and

the *Evils* of a sinful World. We may part with and *esteem*, an *Estate*, with our *Ease*, and our *Life* it self, out of Respect unto the Name of God. But our *Testimonies* expire with our Lives.

Once more, The *Living* may be *Praising* of God by Advancing His *Kingdom* here below. In this Life we may be instrumental to Convince and Convert *Unregenerate* Sinners, to build up the *Church* of the Lord Jesus, and to Do good among the ignorant by an *Exemplary Conversation*. But this is to be done only below the stars.

Furthermore, There are *Graces* proper to *this* Life which God is *praised* by the Exercising of. The Tears of *Sorrow for Sin* will be dry'd up, when we come to the State in which all *Sorrow* shall flee away. *Charity* in Giving and Forgiving to them that need it, -- there is no occasion for that Charity among them that are *above*; *they* are all perfect and happy there. *Patience* under Tryals belongs to our present Condition only; there are no *Afflictions* to trouble us, when our *few dayes full of trouble* are passed away. In a Word. Our *Spiritual Warfare* is to be attended only in this *Valley of the Shadow of Death*. We cannot *fight the Battles of the Lord*, and therein we cannot *shew the* praises *of the Lord*, when we are arrived at the *End of our Faith the Salvation of our Souls*. Our *Fight* is done, our *Crown* is come when we have been *Faithful* to the *Death*.

A Second

A Second Conclusion is, That *Opportunities* for the *Praising* of God are the things for which we should desire to be *living* on Earth. There is a Three-fold *Desire of Life* which the Living have. There is a *Natural* Desire of Life. This is common both to *good* men and *bad* men. *Nature* it self startles at the Approach of *Death*; Innocent Nature shivers and recoyls, when this *King of Terrors* is ready to lay his cold Icy hand upon us. This was *Joab*'s Desire: that valiant Souldier, The *Lord-General* of *Israel* himself, in 1. King. 2. 28. being in cold blood under Apprehensions of *Death*, fled unto the Horns of the *Altar*, as a Sanctuary to save his *Life*. There is also a *Sensual* Desire of Life. This is that which *Bad* men are under the power of. Many are loth to dye because they would not leave the *Pleasures* and *Profits* and *Honours* which did surround them here. They are like the Miser, who on his Death-Bed, hugg'd his Baggs of Gold, and cry'd out, *Must I leave you? Must I leave you?* Their Love of their *Life*, comes from their love of their *Flesh*. This was the *Rich Fools* Desire, in Luc. 12. 20. He wished for *many Years*, that he might *eat and drink*, and *be merry* here.

There is likewise a *gracious* Desire of Life. And *this* is that which *good* men are affected with. They desire to *live*, because they desire to *praise*. They would live, because they would honour God.

God in those matters & those manners for which their Lives do afford them blessed *Opportunities* and *Advantages*. Now this *gracious* Desire of of Life is a *Regular* Desire. A *Desire* of Life for the *Praise* of God, is the only *Desire* of Life, that will have praise of God. This was *David's* Desire when he was visited with Sickness, when he was *weak*, and his Bones were *pained*, then said he in Psal. 6. 5. *O save me, for in* Death *there is* no Remembrance *of thee, in the* Grave *who shall give thee thanks?* Such Desires are the only *right* and *chast* Desires. It is not fit for a Christian to say, *I* desire *to* live, *because I am* afraid *to dy.* Much less is it fit for him to say, *I* desire *my* life in *the world, that I may turn and wind still the Affairs* of *the World.* But This is that which Legitimates the Desire of Life: As every thing is to be *improved* for God, so every thing should be *desired* for God. And thus *Life* it self. We are daily *Praying*, as he in Psal. 102. 24. *O my God, take me not away in the midst of my dayes.* Well, Our God enquires of us, *Why art thou unwilling to be taken away in the midst of thy dayes?* We should have this to be our true Account of it, *Because, O Lord, I am loth to be taken away in the midst of my* Praise.

Prop. III.

The Judgments *of God are to be sought and used by us as our* Help *in those* Praises *of God which are the End of our life.*

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There are blessed *Helps*, which God hath provided for us, by which we may be both *Assisted in* and *Excited to*, the work of our lives.

Behold a *double* Help, *both* implyed in the *Judgments* of God. And he that shall consult other passages in this Hundred-and-nineteenth Psalm, will find both under this Notion insisted on. The *Scriptures* of Truth, and the *Troubles* of Life.

First, The *Word* of God is to be *sought* as the *Help*, of our *Praising* Him. The Prophet of old could say as in *Mich.* 6. 8. *The Lord hath shewed thee, O man, the thing that good is.* Thus, the Lord hath *shewed* us how to be *praising* of Him, by *living* to Him. But Where has he shewed it? Truly in the sacred *Bible*. The Bible is the *Directory* given to us. Every Child is well taught to say, *The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Rule which God hath given to instruct us how we are to glorify Him.* To order a *Life* in a dark world, is as hard as to manage a *Ship* in a dark night, we are in the *Dark* about the *Practises* which our lives are to be employed in. What shall we then do that we may leave no part of our due Homage to God unperformed? The Apostle speaks fully to this Case in 2. Pet. 1. 18. *We have a sure word of Prophecy, whereto ye do well to take heed, as to a* light *shining in a* dark *place.* There, There it is: our Bible is our *Pole-Star*; keep an eye to That and we shall

shape

shape a course Right. All the *Directions*, all the *Promises*, all the *Threatnings* of God, will be so many Helps, of our Obedience. If any man ask, *How do the* Scriptures *of God help men in the* Praises *of God*? Know, The Scriptures themselves give an Answer thereunto, in Psal. 19. 7, 8. *The law of the Lord converts the soul, the testimonies of the Lord make wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord rejoice the heart; the commandments of the Lord enlighten the eyes.* That *Conversion*, that *Instruction*, that *Joy* and that *Light* which the *Word* of God affords unto us, will be no little Help in the *Praise* of God.

Secondly, The *Rod* of God is to be *used* as the Help of our Praising Him. The Lord sends many *Afflictions* upon us. An *Heman*, is afflicted in his mind: a *Job* is Afflicted in his Estate; a *Gaius* is afflicted in his Body, a *Paul* in his Credit, and a *David* in his Children, they *live ill* and they *dy worse* before him. What is the Use we are now to make of these things? Truly our *Afflictions* are to be the Help of our *Devotions*. It is the Call of God in *Mic.* 6. 9. *Hear the Rod.* As we should hear the *Voice* of the Rod, so we should use the *Help* of the Rod. By our *Afflictions* we should be *helped* unto more Seriousness, more Watchfulness, more Fruitfulness. Now those things are to the *Praise* of the glory of the grace of God. Our *Afflictions* are the *purgings* & the *pruings* bestow'd by our God upon

upon us. What are they for? but, *That we may bring forth* more *Fruit*: and we are told in *Joh.* 15. 8. *Herein is my father* glorified, *if ye bring forth* much fruit. Observe it: a *Learning* the *Statutes* of God, is a *Rendring* of *Praises* to God; those *two* things are *one*. Now see what the Psalmist saith, in Psal. 119. 97. *It is good for me that I have been* afflicted, *that I may* learn *thy Statutes*. This then is incumbent on us under every Affliction; Our study should be, *What Advantage, what Engagement to be more holy, is now put into my hands!* Every Afflicted man should ask, *How may the* Sorrowes *of my* life *promote the* praises *of my* God?

But for the *Use* of these things.

USE I.

Some *Evil Desires* are hence Rebuked and Condemned. Especially *two* sorts of Desires.

First, *Impatient* Desires of *Death*, are to be Reproved.

Something is to be said by way of *Concession*; and something by way of *Correction* about such Desires.

First by way of *Concession*, I would say, There are *some* Desires of Death *well-becoming* a Child of God. Such were the Desires of *Paul*, in Phil. 1. 22. *I desire to be dissolved and be with Christ*. When we think of the day, in which we shall go to the the *Spirits of just men made perfect*, and to *Jesus the Mediator of the New-Covenant*; When we think

think of the day in which the *Lord will deliver us from the hand of all our enemies, and from the hand of* SIN; O the thoughts of it should fill our Souls with Raptures of Joy! they should cause our hearts to leap and spring within us. It is an allowable thing to be almost angry with *Time*, to call upon slow *Time*, and say, *Fly apace, Fly away, O Time; Come, O* Eternity, *come and fetch me into the presence of the Lord.* The Visions of the Lord Jesus may cause us to say humbly with aged, faithful *Simeon*, Lord, *let thy servant* depart *in peace.* The Chariots of *Death*, sent by the Lord Jesus to fetch us unto Himself, should be as welcom to us, as the *Waggons* of *Joseph* were to *Jacob* of old. It should cause us to *Rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*, when we think of the *unspeakable joy* and the *full glory* which we are going unto. There are holy *longings* and *lookings* of Soul, with which we may cry out, *Why, why are His Chariots so long a coming? Why tarry the Wheels thereof?*

But yet,

Secondly, By way of *Correction.*

If these *Desires* are *with* Impatience, much more if they are *thro'* Impatience, they become sinful before the Lord. The embittered spirits of Christians, have been sometimes too prone unto such Desires. It was an inordinate passion in *Moses*, when a froward people under his charge provoked him to say, in *Numb.* 17. 14. *Kill*

me

me, *I pray thee out of hand.* Had God granted his Desire, he had lost Thirty years of eminent Service in the World. It was an irregular passion in *Elias*, when the persecutions of wicked men so tired him, as to make him say, in 1 King. 19. 4. *O Lord, take away my life.* It hath been an Observation, that *Many good and great men sit under* Elias's *Juniper tree.* As culpable was the Passion of *Jonah*, when the Withering of a Gourd had that Effect upon him in Cap. 4. 8. *He wished to* dy. The like *pang* of Impatience, did that *Pattern* of Patience, *Job*, fall into; he spake as if he could hardly forbear *laying violent hands* upon himself. Even so far do the *distempered*, unbridled Wishes of many run. Their *Desire* of Death is a sort of *Revenge* on God; they would as it were deprive God of the glory which He might have of them. Compose these desires, O ye raging Souls; compose these Desires. Allay this *Fever*, this phrensy. Its not only an *irreligious* but an *unnatural* passion which you are carried away withal. You desire to *dye*. Well, are you sure that the *Death* which you *desire* now, will not prove a *Death* which you shall *Deplore* throughout eternal Ages. It is said of the Believer in Psal. 91. 19. *With* long life *will I* satisfie *him, and shew him my Salvation.* It is a very disordered heart that will be *dissatisfied* with so great a mercy.

Secondly, *Unsanctified* Desires of Life are to

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be Reproved also. Of these Desires there are Three Sorts to be Reprehended.

There are, first. *Carnal* Desires of Life to be blamed. Some desire to *live*, and wherefore is it? It is because they desire to *eat* and *drink* and be merry. They cann't part with such *Relations* and *Possessions* as are here to be enjoyed. The *Comforts* of Life are the things that cause their *Desires* of Life. One once beholding his fine Accommodations made this Reflection thereupon, *Hæc faciunt invitos mori*; these are the things that make us *unwilling to dy*. Unmortified Corruptions are the causes of these desires. Remember what the Lord hath said in Matth. 10. 37. *He that loveth Father or Mother, or Son or* DAUGHTER *more than me, is not worthy of me.* Thus may the Lord well say to the *Subject* of these Desires, *If you had rather be with your* friends *on* earth, *than with your* Father *in* Heaven, *you are not worthy to be with me at all.* And this by the way is to be said of them that desire the life of their *Friends* as well as of them*selves*. It is for the Interest of the Lord Jesus Christ that the dead *Children* which you lament, *are dead*; or else they had not dyed at all. Now saith the Lord Jesus, *If thou lovest those* CHILDREN, *those Relations more than me, and hadst rather have them with thy self, to my* Prejudice, *than to have them with me, to thy own* Bereavement, *thou art not worthy to have them with me at all.*

Secondly

Secondly. There are *Careful* Desires of Life to be likewise blamed. Many desire to *live* only upon this account, *Some* Child, *or some* Charge *they are concerned for*. They have this or that *Child* which they cannot believe will be well provided for, when they are *dead*; or they suspect what will become of such or such a *Charge*. There is indeed a Desire of Life on such a Score, which is not alwaies very severely to be found fault withal. But oftentimes there is too much *Distrust* in such a *desire*. Why cannot we venture our Families and the Concernments thereof, in the Hands of the faithful God? The Lord has said in Jer. 49. 11. *Leave thy fatherless* Children, *I will preserve them alive*. And he still saies, *I will be a* better Father, *and a* better Friend *unto them, than thou thy self canst be*.

Thirdly. There are *Fearful* Desires of Life which are blame-worthy too. When Death comes with that message, *Set thy* Soul *in order, for thou shalt dy and not live*, many persons are so terrified as to be even at their wits ends. O how they groan. *I cannot dy!* Indeed Sinners that have not been *born twice*, may well tremble to *dy once*; no body can blame *them*; there is a *Second Death*, ready to sieze upon the forlorn souls that are not Regenerate. But such as have been truly turn'd to God in Christ, should not entertain Death with such Reluctancies. Can you not uprightly say, That if you were sure to be *freed*

from *Sin*, you could be content to be struck by Death? O then, be cheerfully willing to *Dy*. Thy soul will no sooner pass into Eternity but it shall experience that thing in *Rom. 6. 7. He that is dead is freed from Sin*. It is often pretended by men, *I would* live *because, I would be more* holy *before I dy*. 'Tis well; but there is not seldom a *Deceit* in the *Pretence*; often something else is in the Bottom; *A Rebellion against the Will of God*. Wouldst thou really and earnestly be *holy*? Be willing then to *dy* as well as to *live*. Death is the way to *Holiness* in the Perfection of it. In short: Good was the Temper of that sick person who being asked, *Which do you desire, to* live, *or to dy?* answered, *I refer it to* God; and when it was again said, *But suppose God should refer it to you?* reply'd, *I would then refer it to him again.*

USE. II.

Let us all be now *Exhorted*, that the *Praise* of God, may be duly accounted by us, as the *End* of our Life, in our Prayers for it. Let us not shoot beside our *Mark*, or live beside our *End*. Let us *pray* that we may *live*, and let us *live* that we may *praise*. It is the most lamentable plight in the world, that a man should spend his *Life* in *Sinning* against God, rather than in *Praising* of Him. But alas, This is the case of *Multitudes*, *Multitudes* among us. How few of *us* [Consider of it seriously] How few of *you* that

are

are now before the Lord, ever seriously thought with your selves, *What is the Errand that I am come into the world upon?* Hast thou not lived above a Score of years in the world, and never yet seriously thought, *What is it that God sent me hither for?* Every man here, I suppose, desires to live; let your *Prayers* express those *Desires*; and say after the Psalmist, *Ps.* 32. 8. *My Prayer is to the God of my life.* But more than so, Let those Desires be for the sake of your *Praises*; and say after the Psalmist again, in Ps. 119. 17. *Deal bountifully with thy Servant that I may live and keep thy Word.*

Three things are you to be advised unto; yea *Four* things are to be importunately prest upon you.

First, *Mark* and *Prize* your *Opportunities* to be *Praising* of God. Every man has his *Opportunities.* Some have an Instrument of a *Thousand* Strings; but the meanest of us all has an Instrument of *Ten* strings, for our God to be *praised* with. Let every man often enquire, *What are my* Opportunities *to glorify God?* And let every man always conclude, *My Opportunities are my Treasures.*

Secondly. Let the *Word* of God *Direct* you in His Praises. Be often Consulting of that: *Peace* will be *on* all, and *Praise* will be *from* all, *that walk according to this Rule.* A Bible,— Christians, let *That* be your *Counsellour* on all Occasions,

The Psalmist could say in Ps. 119. 164. *Seven times a day will I* praise *thee O Lord; because of thy Righteous* Judgements.

Thirdly. Let the *Rod* of God *provoke* you to His *Praises*. If you cannot *Bless* God *for* your Afflictions, which yet, I think, is a thing attainable; nevertheless, I'm sure you should *praise* God *in* your *Afflictions*. Let God gain some *Glory*, and we shall gain some *Good*, by all our Sufferings. Take the counsil in *Isa.* 34. 15. *Glorifie the Lord in the Fires.*

To Enforce these *Three* Things;

Consider *that* Thing wich is intimated in the Text. The *Lives* of your *Souls* are enwrapped in the praises of God. Saies the Psalmist, *Let my* soul live, *and it shall* praise *thee*. So I may say, *Let thy Soul* praise, *and it shall* live. A *praising* Soul, is a *Thriving* Soul. In this consisteth *Life Eternal* it self. The *Life* of thy *Soul* in the Third Heaven, will be the *praise* of thy *God* for evermore. Praise God *for* thy Life; it is a mercy well worth praise. Praise God *by* thy life; so thou wilt begin *Heauen upon Earth.*

But there is a *Fourth* Counsil which more immediately concerns that part of the Congregation which are of *my own Age*, and have therefore a more peculiar interest in my *Loues* and *Cares*.

Tis to *Young* People here, that I take leave to say,

Fourthly, *Begin You* now *Betimes* to live unto the

the *Praise* of the everliving God. My Brethren, you have not yet begun to *live* at all, if you have not begun to *praise* the Lord. You are *Dead in Trespasses and Sins*; you are stark *dead* in the rotten, hideous, loathsome *Graves* of your Unregeneracy, if you have not yet begun to *order your Conversation aright*, and to ponder, *How may I so* offer praise *as to Glorify God?* But is not this the deplorable Condition of *many*, many *Young* people here? *Conscience*, do thine Office! Is not the Hour yet *to come*, is not the Day yet to *dawn*, when *that* young person (whom thou art the *Officer* of God unto) did by an hearty *Covenant* bind himself unto the *Serving* and the *Praising* of the Lord?

But what mean you, O ye inconsiderate *Youths*, to delay the *Remembring of your Creator* so? In the Language of the *young* Prophet, whom God sent unto the *Jews* of old, let me say, *thus saith the Lord, Consider your waies.*

Consider the *Uncertainty* of your *Life* which you have to be praising of God withal. As *young* as you are, you may *dy* before the most aged person here. It hath been truly noted, That *The old man has Death* before *his face*, *but the* young *man has Death* behind *his back*. The stroak of Death may sooner lay *you* in the Dust, than some whose Heads old *Time* hath *snow'd* upon. O look, and see, and let thy heart shake at the Apprehension of it: Thy *Death* stands just behind

thee there with an Horrible *Pole-Ax* ready lifted up, saying as the Prince of old, *Shall I smite them? shall I smite them?* If the great God utter the word, *Smite, smite,* thou art gone beyond all Recovery. The Blessed God hath newly caused me to look into the *Coffins* of two very near and sweet Relations, neither of which had ever seen *Twenty* Winters in the World; and with a *strong hand* He then said unto me, *Go, Go tell the young people of* Boston, *and* Charlestown, *that this is that which they are all exposed unto.* Behold I am now come *in Bitterness and in the heat of my spirit,* I am come to Warn you of it; That *You may dy before you are aware of such a dismal Change at hand.* O do not procrastinate the *praises* and the *Virtues* which the God of Heaven Expects from you; put not off until, *To-morrow*; For tis the admonition to be now set before you, in Prov. 2. 7. *Boast not thy self of* To-morrow, *for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.*

But Consider also, the *Dreadfulness*, of a *Death*, ensuing upon a *Life* not spent in the *praising* of God. O this *Dying!* tis a solemn thing, tis, *A thing by it self*: What followes it? But that in *Heb.* 9. 27. *After Death Judgement.* That *Judgment* will be *Eternal*; and if it come upon thee before thy *turning* and *living* unto God, it will be very *Terrible.*

Hearken to this awful Truth and Voice of the Almighty.

Almighty God, and let thy heart quiver as under the loudeſt claps of Thunder at it; If thou *Dy* before thy *peace* be made *with* God, and thy *praiſe* be given *to* Him, tis impoſſible thou ſhouldſt eſcape the *Vengeance of Eternal Fire*; Small *Chips* as well as great *Logs* are horribly burn[illegible] *there* muſt *thou* too undergo moſt exquiſite Anguiſhes, for infinitely more than as many Millions of Ages, as the Huge Ocean has Drops of Water in it.

O Conſider, theſe *Terrors* of the Lord, and immediately ſet upon His *Praiſes*.

Now that you would come to theſe *Reſolutions*, before you go from the preſent Exerciſe? *Entreat me not to leave you, or to turn from following after you*; but give me leave to preſs upon you at leaſt this *one* Conſideration more.

Conſider ſeriouſly, How exceeding *Acceptable* it will be to the great God, for ſuch *Young* perſons as *you*, to ſet upon praiſing of Him! *Your* Praiſes, they are very much deſired *by* the Lord, and not a little delightful *to* Him. He declares *My ſoul deſires the* firſt ripe *Fruit*; and He ſeem'd to expreſs as it were ſome *Haſte* for the *Firſt Fruits* under the Law of Old. The Lord in a ſort longs to ſee you ſerving of Him with the *Firſt Fruits* of your *Age*, and of your *Praiſe*. He ſaies as in *Cant.* 2. 14. *Let me hear thy voice, for ſweet is thy voice.* The *Voice* of your *Praiſes* makes a matchleſs melody in the ears of the God

Young that

that has call'd for them. The very *Chatterings* of our infants are pleasant unto us; the *Praises* and the *Devotions* of *young* persons are so unto *Our Father which is in Heaven*; and he asketh for them with ungainsayable Importunities. 'Twas said unto a *young* man in 1. *Chron.* 28. 9. *If thou seek the Lord, He will be found of thee,* Even so. *If thou* (that art a young person) *praise the Lord he will be pleased with thee.* One that owns an Orchard full of many fruitful *Trees*, will take a most particular and affectionate Notice of a *young* Tree beginning to have some little Fruit upon it: *Our Father is such an Husband man.* Young *Johns*, are they that prove *the Disciples whom Jesus loves.* Young *Josiahs* will have special *Comforts* in this, and special *Honours* in another world. And, yee Hearts of Adamant, are you not yet overcome to resolve, *I will now* praise *and* serve *the great God!* O let not your Answer be, *I am* almost *perswaded*; but become *Altogether* so. As twas said of him, *Behold he prayes!* thus let it be said of you, *Behold he praises!* How, How can you be *deaf Adders* before the *Charms* of these Considerations?

Lord visit the hitherto-unperswaded young *people here; O make it the* Day of thy power *with them; and keep these things in the Imagination of the thoughts of their hearts for Evermore.*

FINIS.

3 AU 59